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Edmund Louisa C. Cooper  
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THE  
ROMANCE  
OF  
ANCIENT HISTORY.

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VOL. I.

LONDON:  
SCHULZE AND CO., 13, POLAND STREET.



THE  
ROMANCE  
OF  
ANCIENT HISTORY.

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EGYPT.

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VOL. I.

Ἡ δὲ διὰ τῆς ἱστορίας περιγενομένη σύνεσις τῶν ἀλλοτρίων ἀποτευγμάτων τὲ καὶ κατορθωμάτων, ἀπείρατον κακῶν ἔχει διδασκαλίαν.

“The knowledge of the successes and failures of others, gained by history, contains instruction free from the experience of evil.”

LONDON:  
COCHRANE AND M'CRONE,  
11, WATERLOO PLACE.

1834.



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TO  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
THOMAS GRENVILLE.

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SIR,

It is with feelings of the warmest gratitude, that I avail myself of the permission granted me to dedicate this, my first work, to you, since it affords me a means of expressing my remembrance of the kind manner in which you are disposed to view my exertions.

It is most unhappy that adulation so often masks itself beneath sincerity. I trust, however, that in making the above avowal, I shall be believed to utter sentiments which I really feel.

697071

It was while lingering over the page of extreme antiquity which the Father of History has spread before us, that I first conceived the plan I have endeavoured to execute in the ensuing work, and should I be so fortunate as to succeed in alluring any to the study of the chronicles of past times, I shall not have written in vain, nor shall I, perhaps, entirely fail of your approbation.

I have the honour to subscribe myself,

Sir,

Your greatly obliged,

And obedient humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

## PREFACE.

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HISTORY is, perhaps, of all literature, the most beneficial to the mind, for it enables us to appropriate the information and experience of past ages: it is, in a word, the epitaph of a former world, which by laying before us the consequences of virtue and vice, becomes an important aid to morality and happiness. Of this great department of learning, Herodotus, (from whom the author makes his first selection,) has been styled *THE FATHER*—an appellation which every unprejudiced reader must sanction. Nay more, a student of this description will hardly peruse the nine books of that incomparable master

without feeling his affection arrested, as well as his understanding informed : and instead of treating them with contempt for being dedicated to the muses, and because the flowers of romance here and there beautify their pages, will regret with a sigh the rapacity of time which has snatched from us other productions of the same writer.

The stories here presented to the public are taken from the second book of his history ; because Egypt, whose annals embrace the utmost verge of antiquity, is the subject of that portion of it ; and the author making the facts mentioned by Herodotus his foundation, has endeavoured to rear upon them a superstructure—as far as possible following reality for his guide. Even where he has ventured into the region of fiction, he has taken care not to adduce any thing contrary to the tenor of history : where it is silent, he has so filled up the chasm as to continue the thread of each story ; but it has been his constant plan never to interweave, with what is recorded, any thing which might not have been com-

prehended in its range—a method of proceeding, which will, it is hoped, recommend truth without compromising its dignity, and render an acquaintance with remote times more generally accessible. Such at least, is the ardent desire of the author, who, under this conviction, submits the following pages to the indulgence of the public.









## ROMANCE OF ANCIENT HISTORY.

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### THE ORIGIN OF EGYPTIAN SONG.

A SEARCH after human happiness has, with justice, ever been considered an inquiry the most important of any that can engage our attention; it has occupied alike the pen of the philosopher, the moralist, and the divine; nor, although as far as regards our present condition, the pursuit of it may have proved abortive, ought we therefore to consider it wholly useless. The elixir of immortality, and the secret of changing the baser metals into gold eluded the labours of the crucible, and the vigils of innumerable enthusiasts,

yet it is in a great measure to those labours and that ardour we owe the astonishing wonders of the chemic art. Neither the splendours of the Lydian palace, nor the frowns of the monarch who possessed them, could make the Athenian sage\* depart from his opinion, that before any man could be pronounced happy, the end of his life must be waited for,—there being no state of prosperity, however dazzling, which may not be more than tarnished by a reverse of fortune. Let those who think this theory ill-founded reflect on the story of the first monarch of Egypt. Menes the Great was the father of an empire: he diverted, by strong barriers, the course of the Nile, and the foundation of his capital, Memphis, reposed in the ancient bed of the greatest of rivers; the city was strengthened with various fortifications, and the fane of Vulcan consecrated its walls.

The glories of the rising capital soon

\* Solon, the Athenian legislator, when a guest in the palace of Cræsus, the last king of Lydia, perseveringly maintained this principle, although he incurred by it the displeasure of the monarch.—See Herodotus, Clio.

awakened the envy, and excited the rapacity of the surrounding tribes of the desert. Menes hastened to oppose the storm, eager to show the foes of Mizraim\* that he had the valour to defend, as well as the skill to found, an empire. His princes were animated with intense ardour, since they fought under the eye of their monarch, and the invaders from the East were taught, by a dreadful lesson of carnage, to tremble at the sword of the valiant Menes; the remnant of their forces was driven to their camp, which Menes prepared to storm on the coming day, for the sun had set ere the rout was completed,—yet amid the wreck of his hopes, Alchis, the leader of the barbarians, still maintained an unconquered spirit; a hasty council of the chiefs was called, and the determination adopted of breaking through the Egyptian lines in the dead of night. The plan was bold and skilful, but the secret was revealed to Menes by an Egyptian spy, who had penetrat-

\* Name of Egypt.

ed in disguise to the hostile camp. Not an eye of the Egyptian host was that night closed in sleep, the orders of the monarch were promptly executed, and a circumvallation, formed with astonishing celerity, cut off from the enemy the hope of escape.

Alchis and his followers deplored the watchfulness of the foe, and in the evening of the day succeeding the battle, they demanded permission to depart with their arms, pledging themselves never again to molest the territory of Mizraim. Menes descanted in council on the weakness of professions extorted by necessity, and the opportunity now offered him of annihilating the power of Alchis. Finally, however, commiseration for the brave in distress, or fear of the despair of five thousand warriors, whose arms were still left them amid the wreck of their fortunes, induced him to acquiesce, and the invaders, as they retreated, congratulated themselves that the mercy of their foe had paralyzed his good-fortune, whilst Alchis nourished the secret hope of yet avenging

the death of so many of his bravest followers. Menes was welcomed to Memphis by the applause of a loyal and prosperous people, and an immense spoil of arms bore testimony to the triumph of the first of Egypt's monarchs.

His enemies vanquished, or at least repulsed, his attention was now exclusively devoted to arrange the political interests of his rising kingdom, and the most important of all the offices of the realm; that of chief Priest was intrusted to the vigilance and virtue of Phaastis, one of the most gifted and faithful of his court. To a tenacious regard for the honour of the gods, were united a liberality of sentiment and freedom from prejudice. The warmest affection for mankind animated his heart, for he thought he could not better conciliate the favour of the divinity than by loving man—the brightest emanation of his power. The rest of the public offices of Egypt were also vested in deserving men, and the whole government displayed regularity and vigour. The bounteous Nile had overflowed the fields of Egypt, and had again sunk to repose, leaving in

the soil the elements of inexhaustible fertility. Earth and heaven seemed alike to forward his happiness, and this felicity was moreover consummated when his Queen Semiris gave birth to a son, whom they named Maneros—the future ornament of his throne.

In the spring of the following year, that felicity received a check, and that throne was shaken by a second invasion of the desert tribes, more powerful and numerous than the former, led by the implacable Alchis, by whose untractable spirit the faith of treaties was disregarded, when the voice of vengeance called for perfidy. A remonstrance was sent from Memphis to the invader's camp; the ambassadors of Menes were detained by Alchis until midnight, when the haughty chieftain threw a quiver of arrows at their feet, bidding them convey it to their king. They were then ordered immediately to depart. Their leader demanded torches; he was told that Alchis had provided a light for their journey, and the terrible beacon of some Egyptian villages fired by the barbarians fearfully made good his promise. The mo-



narch of Egypt was now again in arms, and, attended by his whole army, hastened to revenge his people's wrongs. It was evening when the hosts came in sight of each other, and a night of unutterable suspense was to be passed ere the important stake could be risked.

Alchis had recalled his various straggling parties, and his camp was thronged by a host, numerous as a flight of locusts. The evening repast ended, the desert chief exhorted his followers to keep a strict alternate watch, to strengthen themselves by rest for the coming battle, and on the morrow to provide with their weapons a banquet for the vultures, and for themselves repose in the palace of Memphis. The dictates of policy recommended to the chief this display of confidence among his party, yet the shout of approving multitudes could not remove from his heart the painful solicitude produced by the darkness of the future; on the event of which hung, perhaps, his fame, his fortune, and his life.

But there were other thoughts which still more agitated his breast, produced from anxiety for the fate of the dark eyed Mitris, the sharer alike of the storms and sunshine of his destiny : he had seen the colour desert her cheek when he rejected the remonstrance of Menes, and he knew she dreaded with intense anxiety the coming battle. He hastened to inspect the outposts, for he felt that affection demanded at least one sacred hour. It was now midnight, and both hostile camps were slumbering in stillness, the wild voice of the watch as they occasionally challenged each other, alone broke the silence. With rapid step, and heart labouring with emotion, he sought his faithful and high-minded consort, preparing to administer the consolation his own breast did not feel, and to whisper hopes he dared not entertain.

He found her sitting alone in his tent, which was illuminated by a single lamp ; she was deadly pale, but her dark eyes flashed with ardent affection ; he gazed at her a moment in silence, for he saw that

she was immersed in grief—at length he said :  
“ To-morrow, my Mitris, comes the battle,  
and when to-morrow’s sun shall set, thy  
Alchis shall be the tenant of a palace or a  
grave ; the insulting foe shall not again behold  
his retreat.”

He paused—for his feelings were denied utterance. Mitris replied not, but, drawing aside a curtain, discovered their infant son—the pride and hope of the warrior chief—wrapped in the slumbers of innocence. A deep glow suffused his face, and his features were smiling as in all the tranquillity of childhood. Both parents melted at the sight, and tears gushed from the eyes of Mitris as she faltered : “ Who shall protect us, my Alchis, if thou art slain ? remember the foe has already triumphed over our routed bands : to-night, as I paced the camp alone, I passed a sleeping warrior,—suddenly I saw his countenance distorted—as though with fear—in the midst of his slumbers ; he seized a javelin, and clashing it on his shield, thrice cried, ‘ let us fly ! ’—my heart sickened at

the omen. Oh! who shall protect us, my Alchis, if thou art slain?" Her words pierced the heart of the chieftain;—he grasped her hand with tenderness and fervour, and Mitris, sweeping back her dishevelled locks, bent forward, and their lips met with a thrill of the wildest ecstasy. Both felt their hearts relieved, and the chief resumed, "Why, my Mitris, is thy mind thus presageful of evil? have our bows lost their force, or our tribes their valour? what though they have been once defeated? this will only nerve their arm for vengeance.

Yet," continued he, placing his sword in her hand, "thou shalt thyself be the arbiter of my fate; if with honour I may retreat, if thou wouldst have me shun to-morrow's battle, let fall that sword!—the signal shall be instantly given, and before sunrise we will plunge deep into the desert; but if thy breast will not endure this, unsheath the weapon, and it shall strew the plain with the sons of Mizraim!"

He ceased, and Mitris stood silent, her eye resting now on Alchis, now on the sleeping boy; at length with a firm hand unsheathing

the sword, she gave it to the chieftain, and, pressing her hand to her bosom, her eyes filling with tears, she exclaimed : “ Alchis ! I have followed thee through prosperity and woe : I can pursue thee through to-morrow’s bloody field, I can behold the wounded, I can weep over thy grave,—I can do ALL but see thee dishonoured ! Go then—thy Mitris bids thee fight ! and may the dust of yonder plain be the couch of our foe !”

The last words were scarcely audible—for she vainly struggled to display a confidence she did not feel. Alchis saw her distress, and, fired with admiration of her lofty virtue, pressed her to his heart with a long embrace.

Footsteps were now heard approaching the tent, and one of his followers presently informed him that torches had been seen in motion by the watch, and that some attack was apprehended. Alchis answered he would join him at the out-posts, and bidding a hasty farewell to Mitris, he left his tent.

By his activity every thing was prepared to parry the expected attempt on the camp, for

not only were lights seen, but the trampling of horses was heard;—all passed, however, and silence was restored. This transient interruption of the stillness of the night had been produced by a manœuvre of Menes. That monarch, under a strong impression of what seemed to him the crisis of the destinies of himself and Egypt, passed the hours of darkness in the society of Phaastis, revolving plans for the conduct of the battle. It was suggested by the Hierophant that it would be highly advantageous to take possession of some sand-hills of moderate elevation, which lay a slight distance from the ground, in which they would engage. As, however, it would be impossible for these troops to escape the observation of Alchis, the Priest farther advised they should be equipped in the costume of the adverse army, since the attack of imagined friends could neither be guarded against nor sustained. Menes highly approved the council, and a sufficient force having been accoutred in exact conformity with the enemy (a measure easily effected by means of the abundance of arms

captured on the last victory gained over them) it was despatched to the above-mentioned stations, which movement had caused the temporary alarm in the camp of Alchis.

The morning at length dawned, and both armies were hastily set in array. Alchis was speedily informed by one of his band of the vicinity of what seemed more of their own tribes ; this he had already himself observed, and immediately sent a messenger to enquire their motive for occupying a station separate from the main body. Such a communication had been imagined possible by Phaastis, and to remedy its danger, he had given the detachment suitable instructions : accordingly, on the arrival of the emissary, he was detained, and a real native of the desert, a captive of the last campaign, was the bearer of a reply. He briefly stated to Alchis that the chief of the reinforcement having observed the advantageous position of those sand-hills had hastened to occupy them—a movement which would give him the means either of assisting his own tribes or annoying the enemy. “ Our leader

only wonders," continued the artful speaker, "that the convenience of the post should not have been observed by the foe; your own attendant yet waits on our chief for farther communications."

Saying this, he left the camp at full speed, and, at the same moment, amid the crash of cymbals and sistrums, rushed on the Egyptian forces. The bands of the desert also raised their war shout, and dreadful was the meeting of the two armies, the national animosities of which were excited on the one side by rage for recent defeat, and on the other by vengeance for the broken treaty. The struggle was furious and doubtful, and the Egyptian detachment on the hills skilfully executed the appointed manœuvre, affecting several times to charge the army of Menes. Alchis performed prodigies of valour, and eagerly pursued the Egyptian monarch through the fight; but though the latter was equally ardent to attack the barbarian chief, they never met. The battle had now raged from sun rise to evening, and Menes, by an impetuous charge had thrown



some disorder into the enemy's lines ;—this advantage was seized by the detachment on the sand-hills, and, raising a tremendous shout, they fell upon the desert bands. The stroke seemed decisive of the day, and Alchis beheld his troops either wavering or in actual flight. Mitris observed the disastrous scene, and rushing from the camp, alternately implored, threatened, and commanded. The sight of such beauty in such anguish, arrested the flight of her followers,—a shower of javelins poured destruction on the troops of Menes, who were pursuing in disorder, and the monarch of Memphis might yet have fallen, but for the death of Alchis. That chieftain had, on the panic of his troops, been surrounded by a party of the enemy ; yet his valour was invincible, his aim unerring, and his arrows (which he discharged with incredible rapidity,) each drank the life of an Egyptian. They still, however, pressed on, and one of them aimed his sabre at Alchis ; he parried the blow from his person—but it cut asunder his bow string. He then drew his sword, and heaped

himself a monument where he fell, of the bodies of the Egyptians.

Another moment would perhaps have given him victory, for at the same instant he expired the efforts of Mitris had begun to take effect ; animated with new-born hope, and fearless of the arrows flying on every side, she now pressed forward to complete her success. As she was pursuing her course amid a throng of ardent followers and dense clouds of dust, she stumbled upon a fallen warrior, and perceiving he was one of her own band, and that his wounds were still bleeding, she commanded some of her attendants to raise him from the ground ; they obeyed, and she beheld with horror, her Alchis pierced with a hundred wounds.

Meanwhile his death had become generally known, and dismay and confidence once more changed sides, the army of Menes rushed impetuously forward ; the tribes of the desert neither asked nor received quarter, and their treachery in breaking the treaty was expiated by a tremendous sacrifice. The sun had now

set, and the Egyptians had retired to their encampment, except a few stragglers who were searching over the field in silence and sorrow, for friends whom the battle had numbered with the dead. Among these, followed by a small retinue, Phaastis, to whose skilful management Egypt was so much indebted, eagerly sought the body of Alchis in that part of the plain in which his bands had well nigh torn the laurels from the brows of Menes. A number of slaughtered Egyptians had fallen around a particular point, and Phaastis confessed the valour of the above mentioned leader by inspecting that spot with peculiar scrutiny. That scrutiny was fruitless, and, leaving the immediate field of battle, he was wandering amid the solitary entrenchments of the enemies' camp, his soul sickening at the carnage of the day, when he suddenly beheld a female standing near a part of the rampart; a warrior of the desert lay beside her, she held an infant in her arms, and an attendant, seemed hastily excavating a grave. The rising moon shed a flood of radiance over the plain, giving

an air of exquisite wildness to the group before him.

Anxious to learn the nature of their proceedings, and, above all, to protect the female from the various dangers by which she was threatened, on ground where her country had been vanquished, he approached, bidding only one of his train to follow. As soon as the object of his observation perceived him, giving the infant to the attendant, she drew a dagger, and darted at the stranger a glance of resolution mixed with some degree of terror. The idiom of the desert was unknown to Phaastis, but the language of nature is unchangeable, and the Hierophant casting upon her a look of pity, and at the same time throwing away his sword as a token of peace, joined her assistant, and taking up the instrument the latter had laid aside, continued to break up the ground. In great astonishment he addressed Phaastis, and, to the joy of the Priest, in the language of Mizraim, with which he had a slight knowledge. The opportunity thus afforded was eagerly seized by the

Egyptian, and he easily drew from her attendant the story of the woes of Mitris,—for it was she whom he had then encountered, whilst performing the last duties for a warrior and a husband. Employing her follower as an interpreter, he used every effort to free her from apprehension, proceeding at the same time with the obsequies of Alchis. All being over, his next anxiety was to transport her together with the infant and attendant to his own station in the Egyptian camp,—to all this Mitris yielded. Ever since the demonstrations of gentleness displayed by Phaastis, she had become apparently more tranquil, and after her own hands had laid her warrior on his couch of loneliness and glory, she cast on the Egyptian a look of great sweetness, though mingled with the deepest melancholy. With secrecy and speed he conveyed her to the camp, for he dreaded her meeting any straggling parties of Egyptians still burning with rage against the tribes of the desert.

His enemies annihilated, and his kingdom established, Menes returned with his court to

Memphis, which he adorned with his taste, as he had protected it with arms. The city was beautified with palaces, and Egypt, while she applauded, was astonished at the magnificence of her first monarch. The utmost care and assiduity had been in vain exerted by the family of Phaastis to sooth the afflicted Mitris, who survived not long her warrior chief; yet her afflictions were more than lightened by the assurance of Phaastis and his consort, that the infant Alchis should experience from them the love and assiduity of parents: well did they redeem that pledge, and their disinterested tenderness kindled the warmest affection in the breast of young Alchis, a breast which was the seat of no common excellence, since to the bravery, frankness and keenness of intellect which he inherited from the desert tribes, were added those softer qualities,—the growth of culture and civilization. They had one daughter named Emra, who was born on the same day with Maneros, the rising hope of Egypt's throne. Alchis and the beautiful Emra thus trod the path of

childhood together, and it was no wonder that two flowers, whose brightness and fragrance shed lustre round the parent stem, sought to entwine each other as the affection of infancy ripened into the love of maturer years.

In the meantime, not only the palace of Memphis, but the whole territory of Mizraim viewed with rapture the various accomplishments both of mind and body, continually developing themselves in the son of Menes; in him all true nobility seemed concentrated, and the Egyptians reflected with delight, that when the government should devolve upon their young prince Maneros, the sceptre would pass from a great to a still greater hand. Their anticipations were reasonable, but their eye scanned not the decrees of destiny.

Eighteen years had now elapsed since the first victory gained by Egypt over her foes,—years of glory to the monarch, and happiness to his people. The bounteous Nile had rolled plenty through his realm; the hostile tribes of the desert either trembled or forgot their enmity; unnumbered caravans poured the

spices of Arabia into his kingdom, and delusive hope, half veiled in the shadows of futurity, seemed to beckon Egypt onward to yet brighter scenes.

It was the season of summer: the Nile had overflowed its banks, and was again at rest, having adorned his favoured land with a robe of fragrance and fertility. The year had brought round the anniversary of the birth-day of Maneros. His father had displayed his taste and magnificence by rearing up that very day a splendid obelisk, on whose sides shone forth in hieroglyphics the convulsions and triumphs which had at once distressed and ennobled Egypt in her very cradle. It appeared, therefore, to Menes, that there was an opportunity offered him of celebrating on the same day those events which had contributed most to the splendour and happiness of his reign, and it was determined accordingly that a royal banquet should be given not only to the nobles, but also to the people. Mandates to this effect were therefore issued;—open places in Memphis and the suburbs were prepared,—



vessels of wine, and provisions of all sorts were distributed abundantly at the expense of the monarch, and the following proclamation was made to the sound of cymbals and sistrums :—

“ The great king Menes salutes his people. Let all labour be suspended, since the feast is spread for all, and at sun-set let the skies read on earth, in blazing characters of light, the triumphs and happiness of Egypt. Snatch the present hour of pleasure,—remember the grave of oblivion. May the gods be propitious !”

Such was the general invitation of Menes, whilst a more particular summons was dispatched to the nobles, together with their families. Soon after mid-day the guests began to assemble, and it may be imagined how much real greatness was contained within the extensive gardens of the palace, when it is considered that in the infancy of states, nobility is the meed of valour and magnanimity. Yet amid this assembly the monarch and the prince were conspicuous above all : Menes

shone a personification of grandeur. Time, which had somewhat abated the vigour of youth, had given a touch of majesty to his features, and changed the graceful flower into the prop of nations : and as the assembled warriors looked on that eye which had been their beacon of glory in the day of battle, they wondered not at the greatness of Egypt or the impotence of her foes.

By his side, in all the beauty of early manhood walked Maneros, whose presence commanded the homage, not only of the eye but of the heart, and the enraptured nobles congratulated their country on the rare and happy destiny that seemed to await her. It had been appointed by Menes that to grace the banquet, there should be a trial of skill between his warrior nobles in a variety of martial exercises, and that the victor should be adorned by the hands of the monarch himself with a complete suit of arms offensive and defensive. The ardour of the illustrious Egyptians was excited to the highest degree by this proposal ; every eye flashed with enthusiasm, and every

voice was loud in praise of a prince who knew so well how to form a nation of conquerors. But among the whole assembly no breast beat higher at the approaching trial than that of Alchis, for he thought of the approving smile of Emra,—a prize to him of more value than the gifts of monarchs, or the acclamations of multitudes. After a life of devoted attachment he had solicited her hand. Her parents had observed with pleasure the constant and growing affection between their own, and their adopted child. Emra had not rejected his eloquent pleading, which had been long advocated by the feelings of her own heart, and the very day on which they had been summoned to the banquet, the destinies of the lovers were to have been twined for ever, had not the imperative invitation to celebrate the birth-day of Maneros intervened. Alchis and Emra however rejoiced in the thought that their happiness would be consummated as soon as they should be disengaged from the palace—they knew not that they were sporting on the edge of a precipice.

By this time a space was cleared in the ample gardens, and the thronging warriors hastened to signalize themselves in the eye of Menes and the prince. Arrayed in the grand simplicity of primitive royalty, the monarch of Egypt and his queen Semiris, together with the elder nobles, prepared to witness the contest, whilst Maneros resolved himself to be the umpire in the feats of arms. Amid the crash of innumerable cymbals, the warriors entered the vacant space, and almost at the same moment the exercises commenced. They consisted in a display of foot racing, wrestling, throwing the javelin, and shooting with the bow—in the three first of which Alchis exhibited matchless strength and dexterity ; the most athletic antagonists were thrown to the ground,—he seemed rather to fly than to run,—and a slight reed placed for a mark was shivered by the dart discharged from his unerring hand. The king, the queen, and the whole circle of illustrious spectators applauded his extraordinary skill, and Maneros, as a mark of peculiar approbation, sent him by an

attendant a fresh garland, and a goblet of wine. The wreath he modestly accepted, but declined the wine till the last exercise, that of shooting with the bow, should be performed.

Every warrior now prepared himself for this final trial, and all eyes were once more turned on the arena. Various feats of more or less difficulty were displayed, the eye of a wooden serpent was transfixed, and several arrows were discharged through a series of rings, whose circumference diminished in proportion to their remoteness. Alchis was still unrivalled. They next tried their dexterity in shooting at some birds set free by order of the prince, and here also great skill was displayed. As yet, however, none of the warriors had shown an infallible hand, and several of their destined prey had escaped. All except Alchis had now exhausted their quivers; but before he fixed an arrow in the string, he requested that some still smaller birds might be let loose. The prince in astonishment acquiesced, and the daring, the incomparable archer became the object of breathless attention. Maneros

was to give the signal for freeing the birds by throwing a javelin into the air. After some moments of silence and suspense, the prince hurled his weapon a vast height upwards, and at the same instant three of the smallest of the tenants of Egypt's skies, with scarcely the intermission of a second, took wing each in a different direction, and three arrows, shot with the rapidity of thought from the bow of Alchis, brought them to the earth. The tumultuous applause of the flower of Mizraim, and a call for a repetition of the scene were the consequence of his unrivalled dexterity,—they knew not they were invoking the evil genius of Egypt.

Again the prince's javelin flew into the air ; again the birds rose in flight.—two were already transfixed by the shafts of Alchis, who, as the strained bow-string touched his breast, happening to tread on an arrow which had accidentally fallen from the quiver, his foot slipped—his aim became disordered, the string twanged with its wonted impetuosity, and at the same instant Maneros, the hope of Egypt, was

laid in the dust. Dreadful was the confusion that followed this catastrophe; some flew to the already expiring prince, whilst others hastened to attend the king and the swooning Semiris to the palace, whither Maneros was at the same time borne. Phaastis and his family, with the exception of Alchis, quitted the scene of the fatal banquet with the other nobles.

The unhappy author of the tragedy had disappeared during the first consternation, and the priest imagined he must have sought his residence. On arriving there he found he was mistaken, and the short time that yet remained till night-fall, was to him, and the almost paralyzed Emra, an age of agony. The sun at length set, but Alchis returned not; and Phaastis resolved to send some attendants in search of him in different directions, whilst his heart-stricken daughter was with difficulty prevented from accompanying them. Hours passed on like years, and the attendants had returned from an unsuccessful search; when at deep midnight, Emra, who was sitting alone at the lattice of her apartment watching the

shining stars as they obeyed their mysterious laws, reckless of the turmoils of earth, thought she heard the sound of an approaching footstep ; yet it might be only the waving trees ; she still listened without daring to breathe,—again the sound fell still more nearly upon her ear, and the moon at the same time discovered a tall figure, the face almost shrouded from view in the folds of a robe. It stopped, and seemed for a moment to listen, and a voice that thrilled through every nerve in the heart of Emra faintly pronounced her name.

“ My noble Alchis,” she replied, “ why have you thus torn our breasts with solicitude ?—but you are returned, and the darkest frowns of destiny are more than compensated by this her last boon. I hasten to relieve my parents from their perplexity.”

“ Stay, my Emra,” he rejoined, “ and hear me. First, do you, I may add, my parents believe me innocent ? Above all, am I guilty in your eyes ? I hold at this moment a dagger, the same which armed my father’s hand in his last battle ; I will instantly plunge it into



this breast if an Egyptian whispers Alchis is the willing murderer of his prince."

"All—all—believe, all know you are innocent!" replied Emra. "O! cease, my Alchis, to pierce this breast with words that inflict far more than the fatal arrow, which to-day bathed our nation in tears."

She would have proceeded, but the warrior interrupted her. "Then farewell, lovely Emra, in Egypt we may not meet again. Yet if the queen of my affections can abandon her country, and cross the flaming desert to the nearest of those happy regions that smile in the midst of sterility, I swear by yon stars to prove that this breast is her's alone; meanwhile I fly to solitude. I need hardly commend thee to the gods, since they will surely protect that being, who, of all mortals, is most like themselves."

"Farewell!" was the only word Emra could utter; it was once more re-echoed by her lover, ere his departing footsteps left her in stillness more terrible than that of death. The destiny of Alchis and Emra had now passed

its crisis ; the innocence of the former had been apparent to every one, and Phaastis applauding his daughter's resolution, she was conducted by her parents across the desert, and in the oasis\* of the waste, the constant affection of the lovers met with the felicity, love such as theirs alone could merit and ensure, since it was founded upon mental excellences.

In the meantime the monarch of Egypt was a prey to unutterable grief. He had spent the night succeeding the fatal banquet in a chamber dimly lighted, the body of the prince extended before him, one of his most confidential nobles alone witnessed, and shared his distress. That venerable companion, after contemplating for some time in silence the anguish of Menes, and the lifeless form of Maneros, so beautiful that it seemed rather to repose in slumber than in death, so impotent, that a niche in a sepulchre

\* The appellation of these verdant specks, which at certain intervals delight and astonish the traveller in the deserts of Africa.

would for ever suffice for its abode, at length broke forth into an extemporaneous elegy on the prince, in verses metrical, though irregular, uttering them in cadences so rapturous and touching, that tears flowed from the eyes of the monarch, and his heart felt a relief to which it had been for some hours a stranger.

At his request the strain was repeated, and his breast again felt the power of poetry and music combined in song. The stream of time at length bore away his more acute grief, yet to the latest hour of his life and reign, he would often summon the inimitable poet to console his monarch with a repetition of the strain. It was called the dirge of *Maneros*, and was the first and only song used in Egypt. It was carefully handed down by tradition, and after the lapse of ages the Egyptians still remembered with a sigh its fatal origin.

THE STORY OF NITOCRIS,  
QUEEN OF EGYPT.

It may, perhaps, be questioned whether tyranny inflicts or suffers a greater portion of evil. If armed with despotic power, it may indeed disseminate its influence very widely, and multiply sufferers to a great extent, yet even if the wish\* of the Roman despot could be realized, and if revenge could be eradicated from the heart, and power from the hands of his subjects, still does the tyrant mix his poisons and sharpen his dagger against himself. He may crush the enemy his injustice has created, yet the remembrance of each victim will only irritate the heart-born scorpion whose sting steeps his days in perplexity, and his nights in fevered vigils or visions of terror.

\* The wish, here alluded to was, that all the Romans had but one neck, that they might all have been beheaded at a stroke.

From Menes the earliest, to Sesostris the most powerful of her monarchs, Egypt beheld a series of kings that filled a period of time sufficient for the rise, progress, and decay of an ordinary empire; but her policy, like her pyramids, was framed to endure, and, notwithstanding the efforts and partial success of enemies, she remained unconquered, or, like her own Phœnix,\* broke forth in greater beauty from a transient eclipse. Yet her princes, though numerous, were weak, and she beheld them glitter for a moment on the stream of time the phantoms of royalty, till they were swept from the eyes of their subjects, whose hearts they had never occu-

\*It is not satisfactorily ascertained what was represented under the allegory of the bird Phœnix, which is described to have always consumed itself after a certain number of years amid aromatics it had collected, and re-appearing in fresh vigour and renewed youth from its ashes. It is generally supposed, however, to have been the emblem of a certain revolution of ages; at all events, the Egyptian Priests considered the appearance of this bird intimately connected with the destiny of their country. See a description of it in Herodotus, and some curious particulars in the tale of Rameses.

ped. Among these pageants of a day reigned Sophis, the favourite, as it seemed, of fortune ; he had witnessed the retreat of the Ethiopians, who had for some time held Egypt in subjection, and thus ascended the throne of his ancestors amid the joyous acclamations of a country newly released from servitude. The Egyptians thought with pleasure of the youth of their prince, which promised a long reign, and if the graces of his person had been accompanied by mental excellence—if the rashness so natural to his years could have yielded to the dictates of more mature minds, or even if it had been gradually curbed by experience, Sophis might have been the ornament of his throne, and the happiness of his people.

Kephrenes, who had been the instructor of the youth, became the principal counsellor of the monarch, and never was that important office held by more worthy hands. At an early age he had braved the dangers and won the honours of initiation,\* and it had been his

\* Initiation into the mysteries of his religion, was the

constant labour to inspire into the mind of the young Sophis a love of philosophy, whose sublime voice can teach alike to reign and to obey. The culture was, doubtless, judicious, had the soil been susceptible of its impressions; but the mind of Sophis, though affectionate, was weak and narrow, and the venerable Kephrenes trembled when he beheld his pupil elevated to the throne. He had indeed scattered, or endeavoured to scatter the best seed, but the blossoms must appear ere the nature of the fruit could be determined. That blossom was formed and nursed into being amid the seductions of a court, and the breath of adulation, and the monarch

most important step in the Egyptian's life; it conferred privileges, enlightened the mind, and unravelled to the initiated several hieroglyphical representations that were veiled to the vulgar. But these privileges and this knowledge could not be obtained without passing through the most tremendous trials, to fail in which, was death to the bold but unsuccessful candidate; of these there is no absolute account, but the occasional allusions to them scattered over history, describe them as appallingly terrible, and such as few had the courage to challenge.

of a mighty people became himself the vassal of pleasure, and the sport of imperious passions. Kephrenes sickened as the painful conviction of his pupil's unfitness to reign forced itself upon his mind, yet he still strove to moderate his follies or administer an antidote to their effects; the memory of early impressions was not yet obliterated in the monarch's breast, and he still felt much veneration and some affection for the preceptor of his first years: yet the torrent was only restrained by a slight and ever-diminishing mound, which the smallest addition to its force threatened instantly to annihilate.

The Ethiopians retired from Egypt like the tide ebbing against a strong wind, which, though it finally retreats, often rolls its waves high upon the shore; they left with regret the fertile fields of Mizraim, and often seemed inclined to renew the war. But the Egyptians were animated by the valour, and directed by the counsels of Bokar, the first general of the empire, and the monarch of Ethiopia experienced, in the loss of his bravest warriors,



a terrible retaliation of the woes he had inflicted on Egypt. Yet, if Bokar was crowned with laurels in the field, a wound was prepared for his domestic happiness, a poison compounded for his heart more cruel than the destruction that sat on the barbs of the Ethiopian arrows.\* Having beaten the enemy from the frontier, he had despatched the news to the capital, and prepared to disband the army. He was, however, somewhat surprised by a command to remain on the confines of Egypt with half the forces in order still farther to awe the Ethiopians. He obeyed, though there was not an enemy to be seen ; but when at the end of a month he received a similar order in answer to another communication sent to the court, he felt his astonishment increase to a painful degree, and it was not long before the enigma was fearfully unravelled.

\* Skill in archery was one of the most distinguished features of the Ethiopians ; their bows, which were of large size, demanded incessant practice ere they could even be bent, and when drawn to their full extent by an Ethiopian arm, the recoil impelled an arrow with resistless force.

The passions of Sophis were wild and extravagant, nor were there wanting those who could maintain a maxim that has ever been welcome to the ears of a tyrant, that inclination is the only law for the direction of monarchs. The sighs of a princely lover are seldom unheeded, and in the court of Sophis force and treachery were employed where persuasion could not prevail. Many of the noblest families trembled or wept in the cruel suspense of fear or the more dreadful reality of dishonour; the former distracted at the future, the latter at the images of the past.

Sphendris, the young and beautiful consort of Bokar, had observed with terror the extravagant license of the palace, and exerted, in consequence, all that prudence and circumspection, which formed a distinguished part of her accomplished character. She cautiously avoided all places of public resort, and refused, under colour of indisposition, every invitation to the banquets of the court, confining herself wholly to the walls and gardens of her own residence. That very caution served to betray her, it was whispered through-

out the palace that the wife of Bokar kept herself invisible ; these whispers reached the ears of Sophis, and his heart was inflamed and his imagination dazzled by the representation of a beautiful and accomplished woman, like a fair gem, confined to the recesses of a shrine, or a sequestered grotto. Yet he was resolved to have still farther proof of the report, and commanded one of his physicians to proceed immediately to the mansion of Bokar, under pretence of being sent by the king, in consequence of his great regard for that distinguished general, to visit Sphendris, and prescribe for her disorder ; and he was further directed to ascertain, as nearly as possible, the nature and number of her retinue. The physician was a man of high talent and abandoned morals, both of which qualifications had greatly contributed to his rise in the Egyptian court.

When Sphendris was informed of the arrival of the royal physician, she almost involuntarily suspected him to have been sent as a spy by some of the emissaries of the

palace; she however resolved to receive his visit, lull suspicion if possible, and baffle scrutiny with superior artifice. He was accordingly introduced to her presence by two female attendants, who still remained in the apartment. He immediately proceeded to explain his errand:

“I am sent,” he said, “illustrious lady, by our monarch, who cannot but feel the tenderest anxiety for one so nearly connected with the general, whose valour and conduct, together with the nobility of his birth, have contributed to place him at the head of our armies. The rumour of the ill state of your health has reached the palace, and plunged our sovereign in dejection, and he loses not a moment in despatching him who has the supreme honour of possessing his confidence to investigate and prescribe for your malady.”

“I am deeply sensible,” replied Sphendris, “of the unmerited favour with which the mighty Sophis deigns to regard our house, of which he gives such a conspicuous token. Your singular talent and proficiency in the

healing art are not unknown to me, permit me, therefore, to ask what branch\* of it you follow? what part of our frame is your peculiar province?"

The physician saw his difficulty; carefully observing, therefore, his intended patient, he at length formed his judgment from a heavy expression of the eyes, the effect of that anxiety to which Sphendris had for some time been a prey, and said with some confusion: "that the various affections of the head had been his particular study, but that having had much time at his disposal, he had gone beyond most others, and had made himself somewhat acquainted with the stomach also."

"Alas! then," answered Sphendris, heaving as she spoke, a deep sigh, "I cannot benefit by your advice; the disorder under which I labour comes not within the range of your

\* In Egypt each physician studied one, and only one part of the body, a circumstance which multiplied them to a vast extent, as Herodotus particularly remarks in his *Euterpe*.

knowledge, since it is an affection of the heart, common to our family, and for which a learned Arabian once gave me a powerful recipe, at the same time telling me it could never be perfectly cured ; I will not, therefore, longer detain you, since the benevolence of our monarch is vain, though the debt of obligation is equally great."

The disconcerted physician expressed his sorrow, and that sorrow was unfeigned, at his inability to benefit her, and departed full of uneasiness to the palace.

Yet though she had thus baffled one whom she considered an emissary of license and tyranny, Sphendris still continued to feel the greatest alarm, which a subsequent occurrence greatly heightened.

In the evening of the day after that on which she had seen the physician, she was sitting alone in a summer-house, revolving various plans of escape from the dangerous capital, when she was startled by the sudden entrance of a tall figure with its face muffled ; but her fears were instantly dissipated by

the stranger, saying: "The friend of Bokar should be the friend of his consort; but in this time of tyranny, the very trees have ears, and every gale a tongue; read this paper."

With a trembling hand she opened it, and its import was as follows:—"Who I am, is needless and dangerous to reveal; suffice it that I fly from tyranny, since the enemy of tyrants must be the friend of all mankind. Sphendris, thy ruin is resolved on, and the laurels of thy Bokar shall be changed into a wreath of agony by the dishonour of his wife. Every moment is pregnant with death,—flight alone can preserve thee; the last chain that fettered the monster is broken, since Kephrenes is put to silence, and the same fortune was allotted me, since I am an abettor of his counsels."

Having read this terrible communication, she asked the stranger whither he was bending his flight.

"To the camp of Bokar," he replied.

"Then," said Sphendris, "you will perhaps

aid me so far (for I read fidelity in that lofty bearing,) as to convey this paper to my husband which I have for some time prepared, to apprize him of my danger, and determination to fly the capital. I only wait the hour of midnight."

She would have proceeded, but the stranger waved his hand with impatience, and exclaimed as he carefully deposited the paper within the folds of his robe: "remember the words of my communication,—every moment is pregnant with death, and those beings cannot but stay too long, on whose track are the hounds of tyranny; farewell, I seek thy Bokar."

With these words he departed, and Sphendris, in a state of unutterable alarm and perplexity, proceeded to employ the remaining time in some necessary arrangements for her intended escape. Pharas, for that was the name of the mysterious visitor of her retirement, was one of the few spirits at the court of Sophis, who had the virtue to disapprove, and the courage to oppose the proceedings of



the tyrant. He had discovered the intention of the monarch to obtain, by any means, possession of Sphendris ; and had been apprized of the visit of the physician, as well as of the other plans agitated by Sophis. Sickening at the thought of the dishonour intended for a patriot and a friend, he sought Kephrenes, whose inmost counsels his breast had ever shared : he found him in a retired part of the palace, of which he was still an inmate, deploring in solitude the inefficacy of those lessons of philosophy he had endeavoured to instil into the mind of Sophis. They discussed for some time the violence intended by the monarch, and it was finally resolved that Kephrenes should make one great effort to rekindle the embers of virtue in his heart, and save him, if possible, from the commission of so atrocious an enormity. Kephrenes, accordingly, seizing an opportunity when the monarch was walking alone in one of the gardens, presented himself, and thus addressed him :—

“ It has not been of late my custom to

obtrude myself upon the presence of the ruler of Egypt ; since other counsellors and other lessons have gained so frightful an ascendancy in his breast. Yet, great Sophis, I should ill discharge the duty imposed on me by thy noble father, when he sank to rest with his ancestors in all the splendour of a victory obtained over the Ethiopians, were I in silence to behold thee arming against thyself a foe, born in thine own breast, a spectre that shall trace the fearful story of thy past deeds, in characters of fire, on the tablet of thy soul. My words, I know, are the words of freedom, a voice strange to thine ear and dangerous to him who utters it ; but the stream of my life already flows languid and shallow, and that death is honourable indeed which is encountered in the cause of virtue."

"Cast thine eyes backward," he proceeded, "on the tide of time, and recall, if thou canst, the images of the past. Remember when we walked together on yon plain, and observed the majestic march of the Nile,

as he pours his waters through a hundred realms, remember how I proposed it to thee as a type of what ought to have been thy conduct. Thy hand, I said, will grasp a sceptre that shall controul the fate of a mighty empire; be like yon river munificent to all; and, like it, thou shalt be the object of admiration. Remember how I opened to thee the secrets of philosophy and the graces of virtue: was thy happiness then less, because thy heart was more pure? or were the unfading and ever varying pleasures obtained by living in accordance with nature less than the feverish excitement of a moment that is succeeded by the poison of regret? I will not now speak of myself, since the aged Kephrenes, perchance, no longer has a place in thy affections; it is on thyself I would fix thy regard. Pause, I entreat thee, in thy career; may the rumour I have heard be false, which speaks of thy intention to dishonour the consort of him who has made the desert reek with the blood of the Ethiopians, filled our coffers

with spoils, and our mouths with songs of triumph. What base ingratitude! what dangerous policy! thus to injure so great a patriot, so powerful a vassal! Thinkest thou his talents are only terrible to the Ethiopians? or that the swords of his attached followers can only wound the foes of Egypt? Enough has already been yielded to the madness of passion, and many noble hearts already sigh from wounds inflicted by their monarch. Remember kings are not immortal, nor the patience of man without limit: think of the day of darkness; why should that moment be hailed with joy rather than mourned by the tears of Mizraim? The return to virtue is still open, since the lamp of thy existence yet burns bright."

Here the sage was interrupted by Sophis, who exclaimed :

"How powerful, my Kephrenes, are the accents of philosophy! how have thy words, like a potent spell, recalled to my breast the impressions of the past! yet tell me, I entreat thee, how shall I retrieve my conduct—how

remove from the minds of those whom I have injured the sense of their wrongs?"

"Since," answered Kephrenes, rejoicing in the success of his remonstrance, "my monarch has opened his mind to conviction, I will assist him to the utmost with my counsels. Banish then from thy court those abandoned associates, whose pleasures are poison, and whose friendship is destruction. Think not these are the suggestions of my own interest; I desire not to share in the government. Recall Bokar—a measure which will supply thee with an active minister, and, at the same time, dissipate men's suspicions of thy intentions towards his wife: with regard to those of thy nobles whom thou hast injured, more difficulty perhaps exists, since it is easier to wound than to heal; yet a change of measures in the prince cannot but operate on the minds of his subjects, nor is there, perhaps, any injury which may not be obliterated by subsequent benefits."

"Thy counsel," replied Sophis, "shall be instantly followed; go, therefore, and consult

with Pharas how these things may be best accomplished—I will myself join you speedily.”

Kephrenes heard, and withdrew to congratulate his colleague on the happy termination of their project. In the meantime, his conference with the monarch was not unknown to Takar—the most abandoned minister of his pleasures—who had, by means of his address and unbounded flattery, gained an uncontrolled ascendancy over the mind of the prince. He had heard, with pain and suspicion, that Kephrenes had suddenly left his retirement, and was in counsel with the monarch, and he had despatched one of his emissaries to watch their proceedings from a lattice that overlooked the garden. From him, however, he could only learn that Kephrenes appeared to be speaking with ardour, and the monarch to listen with intense interest, and that tears on a sudden burst from his eyes; intelligence which, vague as it was, greatly perplexed and terrified the mind of Takar. Yet he resolved to ascertain, and, if possible, dissipate the danger he could not but ap-

prehend; and, accordingly, dispatched the same follower to seek the monarch, having given him his lesson of treachery together with a paper he had hastily prepared.

Sophis instantly recognized one of the most assiduous ministers of his passions, and sternly exclaimed: "Thy arrival is truly seasonable, since thou shalt bear to Takar his dismissal from my court."

"Alas!" replied the artful courtier, "how terrible is the frown of kings! with what horror will Takar listen to the tidings of your displeasure! Yet by what error, great Sophis, has he deserved the resentment of his monarch, whose mandates he has obeyed, and whose slightest breath has been the spring of his every action? Has he not only within the last hours been engaged in an accurate investigation of every circumstance relating to the wife of Bokar, whose beauty and whose accomplishments are the theme of every discourse, and the astonishment of every heart? and has he not been exerting his invention to

overcome, by various means, the retiring disposition of Sphendris?"

"Peace!" interrupted Sophis, in a voice which made the advocate start, "by Osiris thou hast thyself condemned him, since it is for thus conspiring against the happiness of Bokar he, thou, and all his creatures shall be banished my court."

"Never, till this moment," answered the persevering emissary of Takar, "did I imagine that unlimited obedience to a monarch could be the ruin of a subject; yet, potent Sophis, I will execute thy command; but before I depart, permit me to present this scroll, which I found, by accident, in an apartment of the palace, since it seems intended for your inspection."

Sophis took the paper without farther comment, and, waving the speaker to depart, read the following communication:

"Let the monarch of Egypt beware of treachery, which can mask itself even under the semblance of wisdom. It is not the hand



of the gay companion\* of the banquet, but of the wily votary of ambition, that wields the dagger of treason. False and deceitful eloquence is the opium of the soul. Sophis! shake off thy delirium; thou slumberest on the brink of a precipice. Kephrenes may be wise, but traitors are never fools: he requires only the junction of Bokar's influence with his own at once to ripen and give efficacy to the operations of faction."

"Are my senses awake?" exclaimed Sophis, "or do my eyes alone retain their power, while my ears have ceased to discharge their function? Did I not hardly a moment since hear Kephrenes discoursing in all the vehemence of eloquent virtue, and can he be a traitor? he spoke of recalling Bokar, and what say these mysterious characters? 'He requires only the junction of Bokar's influence with

\* So Shakspeare makes Julius Cæsar prefer merry characters as his companions. He thus addresses Mark Anthony :

"Let me have men about me that are fat,  
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights." &c.

his own, at once to ripen and give efficacy to the operations of faction.' These things tally strangely," proceeded the monarch, "yet can we fall thus abruptly from excellence to vice? Hath not Kephrenes spent years in instructing me both by precept and example in the lessons of virtue and philosophy, and can he be a traitor? is there any link in our nature that can connect virtue and vice in the same bosom? There is; and it is ambition. Whilst Kephrenes had the uncontrolled direction of the pupil might he not follow the natural bent of his inclination, and practise virtue; but when the monarch was to be circumvented, when a hostile faction was to be overthrown, might not ambition, which was always latent in his character, break forth; and when a deviation from rectitude could alone satisfy its imperious demands, would such a deviation be impossible? Is human excellence incorruptible? or, are the allurements of ambition weak? The early lessons of Kephrenes inculcated the answer to these questions, and the transactions of mankind show the answer to

be true. If ambition then exist in the mind of Kephrenes, he may be a traitor."

From this train of reasoning Sophis was awakened by the appearance of Takar, who, having prostrated himself, exclaimed :

"I come not, mighty monarch, to deprecate your decree, since, I doubt not, the occasion of it is just; I only crave to hear my dismissal from your own mouth, that the same hand which gave, may resume the favours which once distinguished me."

Rise," interrupted Sophis, "and listen." He obeyed, and the monarch proceeded : "Hadst thou presented thyself a moment since, I had dismissed thee in anger; but a paper has just fallen into my hands that makes my resolution as unsteady as a reed of the Nile : tell me, and tell me truly, hast thou ever held either Kephrenes or Bokar in suspicion?"

"Never, great monarch," replied Takar.

"Bethink thee well," continued Sophis, "hast thou never heard a suspicious expression escape from either?"

"Never," rejoined the courtier; "since

words uttered in the heat of wine are not of more importance than the breath which utters them."

"And what were those words?" answered the monarch, "I charge thee, conceal them not; great fires are apt to throw out sparks; and thoughts of high import, when buried in the human breast, break forth from their retirement, if reason and recollection, the sentinels of the tongue, slumber for a moment."

"Alas!" replied Takar, "do not, I entreat you, mighty prince, press me to repeat them."

"Slave!" rejoined Sophis, his face kindling as he spoke, "wouldest thou then resist a hurricane? knowest thou not a sword is suspended over thy head by a thread more attenuated than a spider's web, which my slightest breath can sever? Declare what thou knowest without fear, and thou mayest again experience the favour of Sophis."

"Since then you compel me to speak," answered Takar, "I will admit that at a banquet I heard Bokar say, when the government of Egypt was under discussion, it was a great

pity that powerful machines were not always in skilful hands ; and when I asked him where he could fix on a greater man than yourself, he replied, pointing to his own shadow on the wall, ‘you would find such a man there.’ At this he looked at Kephrenes, who happened to be at the banquet, and the latter smiled, probably at the quickness of his answer, when Bokar, instantly filling a goblet with wine, pledged us all to drink long life and happiness to your shadowy rival. Forthwith there was an acclamation, and the subject was dropped. I trust, great monarch, I need not supplicate you to think no more of so trifling an incident.”

As he said this, something fell from his robe ; and though he seemed to use the utmost despatch in recovering it, it did not escape the eyes of Sophis, who asked what it was.

“It is,” answered Takar, “a portrait of Sphendris, which your slave has procured from one who has for some time enjoyed her acquaintance ; but concerning which the present aspect of your displeasure had determined me to be silent.”

“Let me behold it instantly,” said Sophis. Takar placed it in his hands, and he proceeded: “By Osiris, report speaks not the truth, since it only compares with women her who is adorned with the graces of a divinity. O that I were a sunbeam, that I might penetrate her palace, and reach the form it enshrines! Who shall stay the torrent of my affection? I will make her Queen of Egypt.

“And Bokar?” interrupted the courtier.

“Bokar!” echoed Sophis, “the conspirator against my life!”

“Nay, great prince,” answered Takar, “he may not have conspired.”

“Did he not,” retorted the monarch, “name himself as my successor?” The courtier assented. “And yet he knew,” continued the prince, “that to be impossible; since if I had no heir, and were this moment snatched to oblivion, my crown devolves on my sister Nitocris. And these suspicions,” he proceeded, after a short pause, “have been farther confirmed: read these characters.”

The courtier took the paper, and read what

himself had written with every demonstration of surprise; and, having finished it, he spoke to this effect:

“When I came into the presence of the monarch of Egypt, I had prepared myself for the consummation of unhappiness—the sentence of banishment from his court—and, when that sentence had been pronounced, I felt impelled by duty to disclose some important information I had lately received; since to have laid it before you when my own doom was already fixed by your royal lips, might, I thought, exculpate me from a suspicion of self-interest. But now, since the sunshine of your clemency is returning, if, indeed, my hope is not a rash interpreter”—

He was silent for a moment, and feigned agitation, when Sophis exclaimed:

“Speak on, noble Takar! for thy frankness and disinterested conduct have placed thee again within my heart.”

“Now,” continued the courtier, “the persuasive accents of gratitude join with the stern call of duty, and both forbid me to hide

from you what may concern your honour, or even your life."

The monarch started at this intelligence, and Takar continued :

"As I traversed the apartments leading to this garden, some one arrested my progress, and, in a hurried manner, said: 'There is treason abroad; let not Sophis trust Kephrenes, who is weaving a web around him; he already prepares to send a messenger to summon Bokar, and that messenger is Pharas. At his arrival they will be invincible: yet, if our monarch still doubts, let him behold this, which I have just found in the apartment of the palace inhabited by Pharas;'" saying which, Takar produced a small figure, crowned, with a dagger in its breast, whose hilt bore the hieroglyphic of a hawk\* grasping a serpent, and this motto on the blade: "my home is the heart of an enemy."

\* The hawk was the emblem of Osiris, guardian of Egypt; and the serpent often represented Typhon, the principle of destruction.—See an account of these and many other hieroglyphics in the tale of Rameses.



All this was the entire machination of the abandoned Takar. Sophis looked with terror at what he conceived the emblem of his destruction, and fell into the snare.

“Go,” said he, at length, “and take from Kephrenes the power of summoning Bokar; and, since the treason is palpable, be thy measures prompt and vigourous; let not to-morrow’s sun behold him in a condition to dispute my will, and suffer not his accomplice, Pharas, to escape.”

The courtier rejoiced at the weakness of the monarch, and withdrew. The command of Sophis was ambiguous; but Takar interpreted it in the severest manner, and instantly dispatched an officer to the unhappy Kephrenes with a cup of poison. He found the sage in the same apartment in which he had been in council with Pharas. Ignorant of the terrible revolution of circumstances, he asked the officer, who was well known to him, the purport of his visit. The latter could not reply; but, pointing to the fatal cup, which he had placed on the table, presented him with a roll

of papyrus, to which was appended the royal sanction. Kephrenes read it with astonishment;—it was a mandate for his death.

“Whence come you?” at length he said to the officer.

“Alas! noble Kephrenes, from Takar,” he replied, “who sways, uncontrolled, the mind of our prince.”

“It is impossible!” rejoined Kephrenes, “it is scarcely an hour since I heard the king pronounce his banishment.”

“It may be so,” answered the officer, “yet he now reigns in our monarch’s heart; whilst he debars all from access to his presence, except his own party. The king gives up to him the reins of government, intent only on getting possession of the wife of Bokar; and if the setting sun sees my sad errand incomplete, I must answer it with my life: Pharas, also, must fall, if he is not already beyond the range of the palace, whose outlets are strictly guarded by the emissaries of tyranny.”

“I entreat your pardon,” said Kephrenes, “for this delay; which, however, is not in vain,

since it has informed me that it is by the suggestions and treachery of others I am chiefly wronged. Sophis is weak," he continued, taking the cup, "yet who is beyond the reach of reformation? Continue to serve him with fidelity; if any should endeavour to avenge my death, oppose, to the uttermost, every enterprize undertaken against him; remember the sacred tie of friendship hath bound us, and, by that tie, I conjure thee. Wear this ring," he proceeded, "for my sake, whose figure, the type of eternity, fitly represents immortal memory; and if the hour shall ever come that Sophis, again yielding to the dictates of virtue, shall enquire of thee concerning the last moments of Kephrenes, tell him they were spent in grief,—not for himself, but for his prince."

With these words, pressing the hand of the officer, who, whilst tears of fire were starting from his eyes, held the cup with a paralyzed and involuntary grasp, Kephrenes, with a strong effort, gaining possession of it, drained the contents. The deadly liquid had been

compounded with fatal skill ; and, in a moment, the expiring sage rested on the throbbing bosom of his friend, a couch the most grateful to the human heart. Persons had also been sent in pursuit of Pharas, one of whom might actually have secured him, had he not been awakened to suspicion by an Ethiopian domestic of the palace, whose freedom he had formerly procured ; and it has been already related how Pharas, in his flight, had obtained an interview with Sphendris, and become the bearer of a message from her to Bokar. He had, as has been narrated, so far escaped pursuit ; but the intended victim of tyranny must likewise often be its most deadly foe ; and the despot who may, at first, be cruel from caprice, may often find his safety pledged for a repetition of his injustice.

The escape of Pharas had, accordingly, filled Sophis with alarm, and he had been tracked with the utmost diligence. His speed and secresy had as yet baffled search ; when, soon after quitting the garden of Sphendris, he was accosted by a camel-driver, who stated

he was then on his route to Ethiopia, where he was about to meet a number of camels, with which he intended to proceed through the desert for a stipulated sum ; but that, having just lost his assistant, he was now in quest of some one to supply his place ; and concluded by asking Pharas if he could recommend him to any such person. It instantly struck the latter that the opportunity of thus travelling incognito to the Egyptian frontier was exactly what he wanted ; he, therefore, replied he should himself be happy to join his society, and in a few words, proved to him he was well acquainted with desert travelling. Terms were speedily arranged, and they proceeded together each mounted on an ass. Pharas had his reasons for not being particularly loquacious ; a circumstance of which the camel-driver availed himself, by talking immoderately, and telling various anecdotes as they rode along.

At length they arrived at a small stream, where he proposed to stop and rest their asses for a while. Pharas in vain expatiated on the absurdity of losing time, saying, he was well

acquainted with the country they had to traverse, and that there were many springs where they might refresh themselves without wasting the night so proper for travelling. The camel driver was inexorable, and with the most provoking coolness dismounted; and, leaving his ass at liberty, sat down by the side of the stream. Pharas almost felt his patience exhausted; yet, seeing no remedy, he dismounted also, and sat down very disconsolately on the grass. His companion, however, was in excellent spirits; and, producing a flask of wine, pressed him to drink to a prosperous journey. Pharas would rather have ensured it by prosecuting their course, especially as there was something in his companion rather confident and overbearing. He was, however, forced to submit, and drank with the best grace he could; whilst he derived some consolation from a view of the now descending sun, since it reminded him that night and its obscurity were not far distant. The camel driver on his side pledged him freely; and, having drunk off a goblet, thus addressed him :

“ I perceive, stranger, thou art not in a frame of mind to enjoy hilarity. I will not, therefore, force the current of thy thoughts. The soul of man is like the ocean, stormy to day, to-morrow sleeping in tranquillity, nor would a dirge sung at a wedding banquet sound more dissonant and inconsistent, than laughter amid the sepulchres of the dead. Although I have already told thee so many anecdotes ; I have yet one tale to relate which may perhaps claim thy interest.”

Pharas gave a faint smile of acquiescence, for his heart was harassed by the terrible images of the past, and the uncertainty of the future, whilst his fellow traveller thus commenced :

“ There was, in a certain district in Lybia, a chieftain of great renown ; his troops swept the desert like a whirlwind, and his own valour was so dreadful that the flash of his sword could dissipate armies as the sun dispels a morning mist. But no power can repress the efforts of treachery and ambition, and a con-

spiracy was entered into by Alrik, a daring vassal. For three successive moons the secret was enveloped in his breast, and in those of his accomplices; and time had almost brought the hour in which it was to take effect, when it was thus divulged to the chief himself. Kassim, one of the noblest of the conspirators, had, since his participation in the treason, become passionately enamoured of Astaris, the daughter of his prince; and his affection daily increasing, and not being discouraged on the part of the princess, the traitor was lost in the lover, and the knowledge of the danger impending over her father, became the torture of his breast. Yet he could not stifle the remembrance of his oath of secrecy; and after a furious internal struggle, he had resolved to absent himself from the encampment of the chief, in order that he might neither behold the charms of his daughter, nor the consummation of the intended tragedy. But if he could escape from man, he could not retire from himself; and he was soon taught, that next to



the society of the object of his passion, solitude most of all things contributed to foster its growth.

“ The day at length arrived, whose sun was destined to be the last that should behold the chieftain alive ; and the unhappy Kassim, unable to endure the conflict of love, honor, and treason, had taken the resolution of swallowing poison, when he was informed by an emissary, whom he constantly employed to give him intelligence respecting all proceedings at the encampment of the chief, that an alliance with the princess, his daughter, had been solicited by another chieftain. Love is a powerful agent, but jealousy is perhaps still more potent ; since to the affection already existing, indignation, it may be hatred, toward the rival, is added. Unable to endure the thought of yielding to another an ascendancy in the heart of Astaris, he resolved instantly to rejoin the camp, and confer, by developing the plot, an indelible obligation on her father.

“ This plan was executed, but his subsequent fate remains in obscurity : the breasts of

princes love not the recollection of great favours from a vassal; nor could the candour, the interested candour, of a confession, obliterate in the mind of his chief, the remembrance that Kassim had himself been a party in the treason he unfolded.

“It is to the first mover of the conspiracy,” proceeded the camel-driver, “that the rest of my tale will relate.

“Informed of the discovery of the enterprise, Alrik mounted the fleetest of his steeds, and rode from the encampment an hour before sun-set. But a traitor at liberty becomes in the bosom of a prince a fire, only to be quenched by his blood: and many horsemen were instantly despatched after the fugitive, whose zeal was stimulated by the love of their chief, and by a princely reward offered to him, who should return with Alrik, dead or alive. Fear is a spur which gives strength for the greatest exertions, and strings the most languid nerves; but this spur only acted on the flying African, whilst his horse was liable to fatigue. Guided by the stars, he had ridden through

the night with the speed of a tempest, and the next day he proceeded at intervals, refreshing his horse with a small quantity of water he had brought away with him. But as evening approached, this was almost exhausted, and he was considering how he should continue his flight, when he perceived a man mounted on a camel laden with dates, who immediately came up and addressed him with much courtesy; and having heard from him a plausible story, invited him to join his company, offering to take him by a short cut to one of the fertile districts of the desert."

Pharas now felt his attention forcibly arrested, for he was struck with the similarity between his own fate and that of the hero of the story.

"I perceive thou art interested," said the camel-driver; "but listen farther."

"Alrik hesitated for a moment; yet perceiving his inability to proceed alone, acceded to his proposal. Accordingly they rode together, and in about an hour arrived at a pleasant spring, shaded by some trees, where

they dismounted, and sat down on the margin of the stream, just as we are sitting at this moment."

Here Pharas felt the most painful sensations mixed with a dark boding of the future ; his heart throbbed almost audibly, and he felt as if the eyes of the stranger (that were rivetted upon him) penetrated the secret that was labouring in his breast ; yet the glance was but momentary, and his companion proceeded :

"The sun was sinking to the west, even as now it is hastening to hide itself behind yon stunted grove, and Alrik was congratulating himself that the obscurity of night was about again to envelope him."

An exclamation of terror had almost escaped from Pharas, which scarcely expired on his yet trembling lips, when the camel-driver proceeded without altering his tone :—"The fears of man are often ungrounded, and his hopes often fallacious. The simoom of the desert passes over him. He falls in terror to the earth, but lives to contemplate his danger and his escape. His bark is tossed by a tempest, but the wind

languishes to a soft and favoring breeze, and his peril exists only in memory. Yet it is not only a stormy sea that covers the sunken rock ; nor so long as the scrutiny of the future shall be hidden to man, can the joy of a moment be a token of prosperity. The bow of fate is never unstrung, and her quiver never exhausted."

Pharas felt as if he were in the society of a magician, who could raise and depress his spirits at pleasure, and he panted to inquire at once the fate of the fugitive African ; yet so irresistibly did his reason identify that fate with his own, that he dared not for a moment anticipate its catastrophe. The stranger, who had paused for an instant, as if absorbed in the train of his reflections, thus resumed :

" In this manner had Alrik passed from a state of fear to one of hope ; but he was taught that the human hand, though it may touch, cannot unfold the roll of futurity, when, on a shrill cry being uttered by the date merchant, he was surrounded and captured by the followers of his chief."

“Thou hast heard my story,” concluded the camel-driver, “of which, Pharas, thou art thyself the hero.”

He said; and, raising a shout, some of the royal guard rushed from the adjoining wood, where they had taken ambush, who immediately seized the unhappy Egyptian thus ensnared by the artifice of one of the most wily of the emissaries of Takar. His head was struck off on the spot by the order of that abandoned minister, and, among the papers found on his person, the letter from Sphendris to her husband was intercepted, and her intention of flying that very night from the capital thus revealed. This circumstance instantly suggested to the person, who, in the character of camel-driver, had allured Pharas to his fate, a project for putting the wife of Bokar into the possession of Sophis. He immediately rode back to the capital with his attendants, and at midnight (the hour when Sphendris was to have escaped,) sought the abode of that unhappy object of the royal affections. She herself had passed the rest of the day since

the departure of Pharas in the greatest anxiety, and the approaching darkness filled her with increasing solicitude. Its propitious veil must indeed be the safeguard of her flight ; yet reason though she may deride can seldom entirely banish that undefined apprehension of peril experienced by the human breast, when an important measure must be executed, during the hours of obscurity ; even though that very obscurity is its principal ally.

It was now midnight ; and Sphendris having collected some jewels, was about to leave her palace with a few attendants, when she was astonished to behold from one of the lattices the gleam of torches ; while at the same time the beginning of the wild strain which celebrates the death of Maneros\* was sweetly wafted from below. She paused in the greatest

\* Maneros was the only son of Menes, first King of Egypt, who died by a premature death ; and the grief of his father and country was expressed in a song named after the prince whom it lamented, the dirge of Maneros.— See Herodotus Euterpe.

amazement; for that was the signal, which, in her intercepted letter, she had agreed to make on arriving at the camp of Bokar. Agitated with the most painful perplexity at this circumstance, she heard some voices beneath pronounce in a cadence of the sweetest harmony, during the pause of the sacred dirge, the following dialogue :

“ Can Sphendris sleep in the dangerous capital ? Can she slumber whilst her Bokar is torn with solicitude ? ”

“ No, she has already fled ; we are arrived too late.”

“ How then shall we discharge our duty to Bokar ? Let us instantly seek her, that we may at least guard the remainder of her path.”

From these words, Sphendris imagined the strangers some of her husband's followers ; and, immediately opening the lattice, interrogated them as to the nature of their errand ; when one of them informed her they had met with Pharas, as they were themselves proceeding by order of Bokar, (who had had intelligence of her danger,) to facilitate and protect her flight ;



but having learned from Pharas her intention of escaping that very night, he had feared they might not have arrived soon enough to fulfil the command of their general. He concluded by rejoicing at his good fortune in this respect, at the same time urging her instant departure. His story was in the highest degree plausible: the signal, the knowledge of her plans, the mention of Pharas, all contributed to give it an air of veracity; and Sphendris proceeded to comply with, what she imagined, the intentions of her husband.

Taking, therefore, only one of her female attendants, she left the palace and joined the troop; when she was accosted with the utmost respect by the person who had already communicated with her. The same story was repeated; she was placed, together with her attendant, in a closed litter, and immediately the whole train took with the utmost despatch the road which led from the capital, to the inexpressible delight of Sphendris, who already fancied herself on the frontiers. But she judged of the future by her wishes; since at

the very moment she was thus congratulating herself, she was in the power of the emissaries of Sophis.

Yet their scheme was not completed ; her suspicion, though lulled, might again awake, and it was on that account the principal conductor of the stratagem had hitherto directed his course, as if for the frontiers.

A little before the dawn of day the party halted to take some refreshment, and the wife of Bokar was attended with the most graceful courtesy by the above-mentioned commander of the band. With the earnest entreaties of Sphendris that they might proceed as rapidly as possible, he professed the most entire acquiescence ; discharging his services at the same time with consummate urbanity. But his graces were the glitter of the serpent's skin ; and his unhappy victim, when she drank from a bowl of water mixed with the juices of delicious fruits, knew not that a powerful narcotic had been mingled with the draught. She, however, together with her attendant, who had fallen a prey to the same treachery, soon

felt an irresistible inclination for sleep, which, as they had not rested the night before, was the less remarkable. Yet Sphendris, ever anxious to behold the consummation of her escape, and full of the idea she was still encompassed by danger, struggled for a while against the oppression that was stealing over her senses. But the united force of art and nature was not to be overcome, and both were soon steeped in profound repose.

This was the moment expected by the crafty Egyptian ; the troop instantly changed their course, and, proceeding with the utmost rapidity to the capital, conveyed their captive, still under the influence of the soporific, within the precincts of the palace of Sophis. The monarch himself was then absent on a hunting party ; and the officer who had, with such fatal skill, circumvented both Sphendris and Pharas, lost not a moment in acquainting him with his success ; and when Sophis learned that by the dexterity of his minister his vengeance had been satisfied, his fears allayed, and the object of his passion procured ; when he beheld as

tokens the blood of Pharas, and an ornament taken from the neck of Sphendris, his rapture was unlimited, he requited with an inestimable reward the unrivalled artifice of his servant, and declaring that the fairest game had already been taken, broke up the hunting party, and prepared to return to the capital.

In the mean time, it has been seen how the dexterity of Sphendris had been foiled by treachery and violence. She had sunk to repose under an impression of comparative safety ; but the stream of time had not stagnated during her slumbers, and a most terrible reality was prepared for her waking hour. The night succeeding the day on which she had been brought into the palace was somewhat more than half expired, when the influence of the narcotic began to subside ; and, awaking from a most profound sleep, the wife of Bokar opened her eyes amid the splendors of a chamber furnished with regal magnificence : she was stretched on a couch of the most luxurious softness, round which hung curtains whose embroidery represented with the most living

vivacity the scenes of Egypt's various festivals, and sacred processions ; and such had been the skill of the artist, that the cymbals seemed to clash, the smoke of the incense to arise, and the blood of the sacrifices to flow. These images were discovered to her by the soft light of several lamps fed with perfumed oil, that poured their flood of fragrance and brightness from vases of cut crystal ; and there was something wild and sweet in the contrast between the silence of midnight, (when Nature seems to pause in her respiration, and the restless spirits of rational intelligence are steeped in oblivion,) and the representations she saw around her of life and activity, of those unquiet busy scenes in which the passions, the weaknesses, and the virtues of the human breast were fervent and in action.

Sphendris gazed around her with astonishment ; and not immediately recalling the remembrance of the past, she was tempted to imagine what she saw, nothing but a fair landscape of fancy's pencil, a fleeting creation of the mind that vanishes before the light of

the sun and of reason. A few hours fatally dispelled the delusion ; yet nature has perhaps justly ordained that the human heart which so often suffers its hours of happiness to be tainted by discontent, or the apprehension of unknown evils, should not always feel the griefs which surround it, and that it should even sport with the flower which conceals the serpent.

After an effort of thought, she succeeded in recovering a partial recollection of the events in which she had been engaged, but all was still wrapped in confusion ; yet suspicion was mixed with every reflection, and she almost regretted the calm forgetfulness from which she had emerged into fear and perplexity. Two female attendants were standing by the couch, each holding a large fan composed of plumes, whose constant motion dispensed a ceaseless and grateful coolness. Of these females she was on the point of seeking an explanation ; but the request died upon her lips, and she resolved not to anticipate the morrow, by instantly drawing aside a veil she trembled even then to see removed. She there-

fore still continued to contemplate the scene before her, whilst her senses, not wholly freed from the influence of the soporific, fluctuated in that shadowy region, that twilight as it were, of sensation, that lies between sleeping and waking.

After a time the attendants above-mentioned were relieved by others, who, approaching with noiseless step, received the fans from those who were retiring, and took in silence the station they had occupied : yet she fancied that one eyed her with compassion, and this idea was strengthened, when the same attendant, heaving a sigh, said in a scarcely audible whisper, “ How beautiful and unprotected !”

These words renewed the fears of Sphendris, which the morning light was destined to convert into despair. The sun had risen upon Egypt, and Sphendris was finally recalled at once to sensation, and the perfect recollection of the circumstances in which she had been involved ; and on looking round the chamber, and missing her own attendant, who had purposely been withdrawn by the king’s minister,

she enquired concerning her of the two females already mentioned, when one of them replied, "She has been removed to another part of the palace."

"Of what palace?" demanded Sphendris in a voice of wild terror;—"where am I? are not these the frontiers of Egypt?"

"Alas! noble lady," answered Mena, (the same domestic who had the night before shown commiseration for her condition :) "know you not you are in the palace of Sophis, whither you were conveyed yesterday?"

Here she was interrupted by the unhappy captive, who broke out into a wild laugh, which was followed by a torrent of tears; after which, becoming outwardly more composed, she ordered the attendants to retire to the anti-chamber. They obeyed; and while alone, she endeavoured to collect the energies of her spirit, and finally resolved to exert every faculty, and brave every peril for an escape; and, if this should be impossible, to elude, even by a voluntary death, the grasp of tyranny.

There is a kind of satisfaction which never



fails to result from a good and generous resolution, whilst a concerted plan of opposition becomes an object to which the faculties of the mind may be strenuously directed, and the hope, however glimmering, of eluding tyranny, can alleviate the pressure of the most galling chains. This satisfaction and this hope were now experienced by Sphendris ; and thus feeling her mind somewhat relieved, she clapped\* her hands for the domestics, who instantly appeared, and she arose.

About noon on the same day Sophis returned to his palace, and immediately sent one of his courtiers to announce to Sphendris his intention of visiting her ; a message which was received with dignity, though not apparently with displeasure : nay, she even so far mastered her feelings as to send the monarch an answer of great courtesy. She intended to oppose artifice to artifice ; whilst the joy of Sophis was

\* Domestics are often summoned in the East by clapping the hands, being frequently only in anti-rooms.—  
See the Story of Anastasius.

unlimited at his seeming triumph, and he trusted that the importunities of a royal lover in the bloom of youth would complete the conquest.

He accordingly lost no time in presenting himself to the wife of Bokar ; in whose features and deportment beauty and majesty were so exquisitely blended, that though his heart was instantly kindled, he felt abashed in the presence of his captive, and ardently wished that she were less beautiful or less virtuous, that himself could abandon the seductions of vice, or Sphendris the path of honour. Yet he speedily shook off his embarrassment, and urged his suit in a long address ; pourtraying in vivid colours the ardour of his passion, and the sincerity of his devotion ; and concluded by intreating her to pardon the apparent violence which had adorned the palace with her presence, since its origin, must be sought in her own incomparable beauty.

But though he had employed all his eloquence, he expected that his solicitations would have been repulsed with scorn. His delight

was therefore as great as his astonishment, when Sphendris replied, she could never sufficiently prize the honour of holding a place in his royal heart, and that instead of pardoning, she rather thanked the fortune which had prevented her from leaving the capital ; a measure, she said, prompted more by the jealousy of Bokar than her own desire ; and which, had it taken effect, might perhaps for ever have prevented her from beholding and listening to the most graceful and eloquent monarch that had ever adorned the world.

Sophis could scarcely believe his own senses, and answered, his eyes sparkling as he spoke : “ Since, my princess, the queen of as many hearts as glow with human feelings, deigns thus to return the affection of the most faithful of her slaves, let us instantly repair to yonder summer-house, (pointing, as he spoke, to a light pavilion, raised in an adjoining garden,) where a banquet shall be prepared, and where, beneath the impervious shade of innumerable curtains, thou shalt repose on a soft couch, while music breathing from afar in wild bursts of harmony

shall sweetly respond to the ecstasy of our hearts."

"Alas, great monarch!" answered Sphendris, "I may perhaps offend you; yet it is possible that your clemency may excuse my temerity. Defer, I intreat you, till to-morrow, what you propose; happiness, like grief, may sometimes overpower the mind, and the sudden change that has taken place in my circumstances may well produce a revolution of my feelings. I slept a fugitive, I awoke in a palace; I slept amid the frowns, I awoke amid the sunshine, of fortune; besides which, to-day is the anniversary of my marriage with Bokar, and an undefined scruple withholds me till to-morrow from the bliss you promise."

The thought of this delay was highly displeasing to Sophis; yet contenting himself with the progress he had already made, he resolved to yield this point. It was accordingly agreed they should meet the next day at noon in the pavilion; and he quitted for the present the society of Sphendris, to boast of his triumph amid his train of flatterers.

On his departure she summoned one of her attendants, the same who had already won her confidence, and thus addressed her:—"I think Mena, my fate is not unknown to thee—a conjecture originating in words of compassion which escaped thee last night, when I was apparently sleeping, and which thy assiduous and affectionate attentions have since confirmed."

The attendant here became confused, and Sphendris proceeded:—"Fear not my penetration of thy thoughts, but listen to a project I am about to disclose. I have this day seen the monarch of Egypt, whose heart I have had the misfortune to captivate, and he vainly hopes I have surrendered myself to his will. With difficulty I have prevailed upon him to leave me this day in solitude, and to-morrow at noon we are to meet in yonder pavilion. But, Mena, such a morrow must never come; the rising sun must not behold me in the capital. I will to-night array myself in thy garb; in which, under the favour of darkness, I shall easily get beyond the precincts of the

palace, and the rather, since from the secret mode of my conveyance hither, my person is known to few of the retainers of Sophis. Once free, I shall proceed immediately towards the frontiers by any means that may offer itself. I may encounter difficulties or even death, but I will never yield to the solicitations of the tyrant."

"Alas ! noble lady," answered the attendant, "what is it you propose ? Let us imagine you for a moment beyond the range of the palace, how would you escape the thousand perils that surround your path ? how elude the pursuit of Sophis ? I would rather suggest the following plan. There is at this moment among the royal guards an officer, who for his great merit when under the banners of Bokar, was raised to the rank he now holds, whilst the counsels of our monarch were still directed by Kephrenes. Since the aggrandizement of Takar, his situation has become every day more painful, until at length he has resolved to quit the court, and rejoin his former patron. I doubt not procuring you a conference, and it is

highly possible he may hasten his departure, so as to leave the palace to-night."

Sphendris reflected for a moment; she had already once been the victim of perfidy, and the lessons of experience are indelible: yet she considered the almost insurmountable difficulties with which her own project must be embarrassed, and finally resolved once more to commit herself to a stranger. Mena contrived the meeting she had promised, and the officer, who was not unacquainted with the story of the wife of Bokar, pledged himself in the most solemn terms to escort her to the frontiers. His arrangements were speedy and secret; and at midnight, accompanied by Sphendris, he left the palace; having ordered his domestics, as soon as their departure should become known, to affect to discover their route, but in reality, to lead their pursuers into an opposite direction.

Very early the next morning a report spread like lightning throughout the palace, that Sphendris had thrown herself into the arms of one of the royal guards, and that both had

escaped. Sophis, incensed at the intelligence, ordered an immediate pursuit, and the fleetest steeds were ready to give efficacy to his commands; but the skilful manœuvre of the protector of Sphendris, took instant effect, and the zeal and swiftness of men and horses were alike exerted in a wrong course.

In the mean time, Bokar, at his station on the frontiers was a prey to much solicitude; alarming accounts of the tyranny of the court and decline of the influence of Kephrenes had reached him and filled him with anxiety; but when he was informed of the death of that illustrious man, and the undivided ascendancy of Takar, he trembled for his country, and resolved a return to the capital in spite of the orders of his sovereign. Dark rumours of the death of his friend Pharas had also reached him, but every feeling was lost in that of indignation, when, as he was sitting one evening alone in his tent, his amiable and accomplished Sphendris, whose image since the terrible tidings from the capital, had formed the subject of his waking, and the vision of his



sleeping thoughts, suddenly appeared, mounted on horseback with her faithful protector by her side. The transports of affection have ever been the same, since the same feelings have ever vibrated in the human heart; and Bokar and Sphendris as they mutually strained each other in their arms, felt that they forgave fortune all her frowns, since they had been succeeded by so bright a smile. They vied with each other in expressions of gratitude for the fidelity and unwearied exertions of the officer; who contemplated with delight, happiness to which he had so far contributed.

Not many days elapsed ere the court was filled with the rumour that both Sphendris and the officer who had deserted the palace, were in the camp of Bokar. Tyrants are often cowards, and Sophis was seized with the utmost terror at this report. The memory of Sphendris haunted his imagination, and he dreaded the resentment of Bokar; yet the violence of a despot scarcely knows where to pause, and the acts of tyranny are unrestrained,

when revenge and security demand, or seem to demand, the same measures.

Egypt was taught this lesson by the death of many of her most illustrious nobles who were sacrificed to the jealousy of Sophis. All who were in any way connected with Bokar were marked as his especial victims ; and such as had not fled, were seized and held as hostages in case that general should attempt any revolution. The will of Takar was uncontrolled ; and he abused his power by tormenting even the monarch to whom he owed his aggrandizement. Often would he pourtray in lively colours to Sophis the horror with which he was regarded by his subjects, and the many conspiracies still forming against him of which he pretended to have the key, and for whose extinction he alone could provide the means.

The wretched Sophis was but the shade of royalty, yet he felt keenly the insolence of Takar, and sighed to be emancipated from fetters himself had forged ; but the frightful

scenes of plots and machinations depicted by that artful courtier terrified his imagination and paralyzed every effort of his mind. Takar seemed now at the summit of ambition, yet one thing was still wanting, namely, to secure to himself the crown.

Between his grasp and that bright object, stood Nitocris; her fall accomplished, he doubted not of moulding Sophis to his will; and all he had yet gained, appeared as nothing to his insatiable ambition, which, scorning the height it had already attained, fixed its eagle gaze on the pinnacle of greatness that still rose above it—whence flashed the diadem of Egypt. But Nitocris must be removed ere this could be effected, and, in contriving her ruin, he employed the whole force of his artifice. He began by incensing the princess against her brother, insinuating that in case he should have no son, he intended, if possible, to contravene the usages of Egypt, and adopt a successor in order to prevent the crown from descending to a female, lest by her marriage with some foreign potentate, the interests of

another nation should be brought into collision with those of her own subjects. Nitocris was violent and ambitious, and the idea of a measure that would exclude her from all hope of the government wrought incessantly on the turbulent elements of her nature. Takar saw his advantage, and while he constantly enjoined the utmost secrecy, he failed not still to inflame her animosity, till in the phrenzy of her excitement she broached the possibility of deposing Sophis, by taking advantage of the hatred with which his government was regarded,—a revolution for which Bokar was proposed as the principal instrument. Takar already fancied the princess within his toils, and now hastened the catastrophe of his plot.

Presenting himself one day to Sophis, he represented to him he had discovered a conspiracy more terrible than any which had ever threatened the monarch, and forthwith explained with much apparent reluctance, the dangerous purpose of Nitocris, imposing at the same time the utmost secrecy till he should make farther discoveries.

Sophis was thrown by this information into the utmost alarm, and avoided, under various excuses, the society of his sister, whilst the abandoned Takar pretended still to elicit some new fact, ever entreating him at the same time, to moderate his resentment till yet clearer proof should be obtained of the guilt of the princess. This evidence he proposed to procure by means of a communication Nitocris had intended sending to Bokar, and which he meant to intercept and lay before Sophis.

The fate of Nitocris had now reached its crisis, and Takar only needed the possession of the communication above mentioned to hurl her from a palace to destruction. But the female imagination is restless and penetrating, and it is just that suspicion, which so often fosters, should sometimes disconcert the machinations of treachery.

Takar had triumphed over Kephrenes and Pharas; he had defied the virtue and the talents of experienced statesmen; he had risen on their ruins to sway the destinies of Egypt; but he was doomed to fall before the superior

artifice of a woman, and to behold that deceit which had been the means of his advancement armed against him for his fall. Much astonishment had been awakened in the breast of Nitocris by the decided manner in which her brother had, of late, avoided her society; and that astonishment was changed into suspicion by accounts given her by one of the domestics of the palace of the perturbed appearance of Sophis. She knew that the character of Takar was by no means unexceptionable, and involuntarily connected with him the estrangement of her brother. Jealousy of his proceedings being once awakened, the minutest circumstance served to cherish its growth; and observing the eagerness with which he urged her to explain her sentiments to Bokar, she was resolved to pause, and not hastily, by taking so decided a step, place herself in the power of the minister; at the same time she determined, if possible, to gain an interview with her brother, and endeavour to ascertain the reality of Takar's suggestions.

Accordingly one day, when Sophis was alone,

she presented herself on a sudden without having given any intimation of her design. The monarch was startled at her unexpected appearance, for the alarming accounts of her treachery, given by his minister, had taken entire possession of his imagination; but the meeting was now effected, and Nitocris, anxious to gain as much as possible by the precious moments, proceeded immediately to enquire of Sophis on account of what weakness, or what incapacity in her, he was revolving the idea of transgressing the laws of Egypt by excluding her from the succession. The monarch was astonished beyond utterance by this question, which he at length answered, by asking the princess in his turn what delusion had taken possession of her intellects;—at the same time disclaiming in the most positive terms, any such intention, and he concluded by charging her with entering into cabals for the subversion of his government. On her part, Nitocris was now thrown into the utmost amazement, whilst she at once penetrated the perfidy of Takar. She immediately denied the accusation in the most vehement manner, and called

upon Sophis to produce his evidence. She felt, indeed, the charge was not groundless, and regretted she had expressed herself with so little caution to that designing minister;—she perceived that either he or herself must fall, and resolved to anticipate his efforts. She therefore related to her brother the whole of Takar's representations with regard to the violation of the succession, and Sophis replied as she had expected, that it was from the same source he had received intelligence of her designs; declaring that, after what he had heard, he could repose no confidence in Takar. Nitocris in a torrent of passionate eloquence echoed his sentiments, and both agreed in the necessity of his destruction. But the princess was well acquainted with the weakness of her brother, and remembered the revolution which had a short time since condemned Kephrenes. She therefore determined that Takar and Sophis should never meet; nor was her dexterity less than her resolution.

Leaving the monarch, she sent in haste to the minister as if to consult farther on the



intended conspiracy. Takar obeyed the summons, and to his infinite delight beheld a paper in the hands of the princess, which she professed to be a communication for Bokar. The minister urged the celerity of its departure, eager to lay before his sovereign so clear an evidence of her treason. Nitocris acquiesced in his suggestions, and filling two goblets with wine, invited him to drink to the success of their project. Takar congratulated himself on the depth of his artifice, but knew not he was the victim of superior treachery. He drained the goblet, and almost at the same moment expired—for a deadly drug had been mingled with the draught. Nitocris instantly stamped on the ground, and his body was hurried away by some attendants who appeared at the signal.

The celerity of the princess had not been in vain, for Sophis already repented of the haste with which he had condemned his minister. Yet when his destruction became known, he affected to rejoice at it, though he secretly trembled in the vicinity of a

woman who had displayed such resolution and address. That woman was indeed a sister, but representations of Takar still rung in his ears,—and tyrants can confide in few. On Nitocris likewise the suggestions of that minister produced some solicitude, notwithstanding they had been so positively disclaimed by the monarch, and the palace accordingly became a scene of some outward affection and much real suspicion between herself and Sophis.

Amid all their discord, however, they were unanimous in the principles of despotism. Bokar was still watched with a jealous eye, and many of his connexions in the capital subjected to a rigorous confinement.

A king who respects his nobles may long trample with impunity on his meaner subjects; but when by deep injuries, he arouses the indignation of the great, he rashly excites a tempest in which he may be lost. Whilst the nobles are untouched, they may behold the tyrant with indifference, but when their rights are infringed, they are eager to avenge themselves on the private enemy. It was thus,

that by various acts of violence, Sophis had awakened the hatred of some, and the apprehension of all the nobility of Egypt; and at a splendid banquet given by one of the courtiers in honour of his monarch's birthday, poison from an uncertain hand cut short at once his reign and his life, whilst yet in the vigour of youth. The Egyptians rejoiced at their deliverance; but if a crafty tyrant is more terrible than a weak one, their happiness was not increased by the accession of Nitocris to the throne. Eminent alike in mental and bodily graces, it was in her power to gain and deserve the affections of her country, as well by her personal attractions as her exertions for the weal of the state. But the love of a people cannot be conciliated without a sacrifice on the part of the prince of the privilege claimed by absolute despotism,—a sacrifice which Nitocris was unwilling to make. In her eyes, a diadem was without splendour if its wearer acknowledged any other sway than his own will, and she cared not for the affection of her subjects, if she could remain absolute

by the influence of fear. But she had been taught that fear was compatible with hatred, and that he who inspires the one, may become the victim of the other :—a lesson, which if it set no limits to injustice, must at least awaken vigilance.

Nitocris accordingly took every precaution that could fortify her government; and her person was perpetually guarded by a body of Ethiopian mercenaries from whose bows—which no other nation could even bend—arrows were impelled with a force no armour could resist.

The commencement of her reign was the signal for those who had shunned the tyranny of Sophis, to leave the country and return to the capital; and amongst them, Bokar, whose presence was no longer required on the frontiers, hastened to revisit the mansion of his fathers, and pay his tribute of homage to the queen. It was not without horror that Sphendris again entered the city in which she had been beset by such perils;—yet, if her eye could have penetrated the future, it would

have looked back on that scene of danger as on one of comparative tranquillity.

In the meantime the court of Nitocris exhibited the same picture of licence and profligacy as that of the former reign. An alliance with the princess was sought by various suitors,—but she was inexorable to all. Yet though from a fondness of unlimited power she declined marriage, her vanity was still predominant and her passions vehement. A veil was cast over the scandalous proceedings of the palace, yet it was notorious that many lovers were lodged within its precincts, who vied with each other in all the arts of flattery,—whilst the greatness of royalty melted away in a vortex of pleasure and dissipation. The contagion of example is swift and resistless, and Egypt would have been lost in a lethargy of luxury and excess, if the reins of government had not soon fallen into a more prudent hand.

Among the residents at court was Tarak, commander of the Ethiopian mercenaries, who

by the graces of his person and superior address soon ingratiated himself with the queen, and speedily rose to the highest place in her affections. All his former rivals were left to pine in comparative or complete neglect, and the various departments of government were virtually under his control. Nitocris had denied the sceptre to a husband, but she granted it to a lover, and Egypt confessed with a blush, she was happier under the administration of Tarak the Ethiopian, than that of her native ruler. He saw and exerted himself to remedy the many evils which threatened to undermine the state, and endeavoured, by clearing the court of its most abandoned inmates, to lessen the immorality of the capital.

Nitocris beheld many of her desires opposed or annulled; yet she was contented to enjoy only the shadow of command in the embraces of Tarak, secretly reflecting at the same time that it was in her power to dismiss him at pleasure. But that power was gradually

abating, since the artful Ethiopian was weaving at once a web around her heart, and securing in his grasp the powers of government. He sent private communications to his native country, full of the most flattering hopes, assuring the Ethiopian monarch he would soon reduce Egypt under his sway. The project was bold, though not wholly chimerical, since if he could but prevail on Nitocris to grant him her hand, his ascendancy in the administration would be secured, and he subsequently intended, by augmenting the number of the mercenaries, and gradually putting all the offices of government into the hands of men of his nation and party, to render Egypt defenceless.

But to all this the marriage of Nitocris was indispensable ; for, notwithstanding his influence with the queen, he was conscious a new attachment might alienate her affections, and the same caprice which had given him a place in her heart, might banish him the palace or perhaps Egypt. He therefore used every ar-

tifice that could work upon the ardent passion of Nitocris, and pressed her with the most vehement solicitations to render by marriage, his felicity as permanent as it was transcendant.

“Consider,” he said, “consider, I intreat thee, we live not in the blissful regions of the gods, where change cannot come, and where happiness is eternal; our life is like a cloud of the sky,—the sport of events, as that is of the winds of Heaven; the present hour is all we can call our own, since the past with its pleasures and its pains is soon lost in the obscurity of distance, or only speaks with a mysterious voice to the memory, there to awaken the torture of self reproach, or a sigh for departed pleasures; and the future is veiled in impenetrable darkness which conjecture cannot fathom, and in whose fruitful bosom are buried decrees which display to us our weakness, and make us regret the conclusions of our reason and the freedom of our agency. How easily might a war break out on the fron-



tiers that might require my presence—how then could I quit the capital—since the fever of jealousy must be proportioned to the ardour of my affection? I am indeed an Ethiopian; yet if it is true that Egypt flourishes under my sway, must she not acknowledge me for a benefactor? Am I the less deserving your love, because I have not betrayed your trust; or have I less merited the sovereign smile, because I have achieved the prosperity of her subjects? If you love me, princess, wherefore should you hesitate to render our happiness indissoluble? If it is otherwise, if the gay vision of hope is without foundation, let me but hear my sentence from those lips, and I will fly from the fields of Mizraim.”

The passionate expressions of the lover were lost in the artful adulation of the politician; yet Nitocris could not but yield to their force,—since vanity and affection spoke the same language within her breast, and she resolved, if possible, to raise the Ethiopian commander to the throne of Egypt. But national ani-

mosities are implacable, and the sands of the desert still reeked with a war which had threatened the liberty of Mizraim. The idea of a union of their sovereign with their perpetual foe jarred discordantly in the minds of the nobility ; especially since that sovereign was a female,—a circumstance which must in a great measure subject Egypt to the will of the Ethiopian. The affair was nevertheless agitated by Nitocris, and strenuous efforts made to overrule the nobility ; but those efforts were fruitless, and it was even represented to the queen, that if she persisted in her design, a revolution was inevitable. Tarak saw his difficulty, and tormented with the fever of disappointed ambition, he resolved the most deadly vengeance.

Taking advantage of the great point at issue between Nitocris and her nobles, he excited as much as much as possible the resentment of the former, adding the influence of fear to that of indignation, till the queen, wrought upon by his instigations, embraced a design as terrible

as ever entered the heart of a tyrant. If, however, the eloquence of the first mover be more guilty than the facility of him who yields to an evil suggestion, the crime of the Egyptian princess must be diminished by the artifice of the Ethiopian mercenary.

“Is it thus,” he would say, “great Nitocris, that your will is to be shackled by a subject? wherefore do those hands sway the sceptre of Egypt? why does a diadem encircle those locks? consider the peasant, the whole of whose estate would be lost in one of the royal gardens, yet whose liberty is greater than thine. He loves, and if his affection is returned, he is happy.

“Cast from thee, then, great princess, those vain insignia of royalty, since the reality of freedom is better than the phantom of power. Or if that hand still retain them, make the nobles of Egypt acknowledge that, though they are governed by a woman, yet that woman is Nitocris; and teach them to forget amid their fear, their contempt of a sovereign! Was not Sophis, your great brother, able even to trans-

gress the bounds of what men denominate right? Did not Kephrenes and Pharas fall before his nod? And was not the wife of one of his most distinguished nobles placed at his disposal, and was she not indebted for her escape to her own art rather than to any restraint imposed by his subjects on your predecessor? He fell indeed by conspiracy; and here lies the secret of the present insolence of your nobility. Can they imagine the weal of Egypt will suffer from our union? Surely that is impossible; has it not flourished and increased in vigour under my administration? And is it to be thought the perpetuity of a good frame of government can be less advantageous than its commencement? No, great princess! it is not this they fear;—it is the sting of past crime which still rankles in their breast. They yet live who mingled the poison, that drank the life of a prince. The lapse of time has not lulled the vigilance of Bokar and his party, they well know my hatred of their perfidy, and it is the dread of my animadversion, should I be firmly established in the

government, which makes them hostile to our union. They have long regarded me with jealousy, because I faithfully protect your throne, and they already boast of having fettered their sovereign. Yet, mighty Nitocris, show them, I implore you, the futility of their assurance, that they may know Egypt's queen is also mistress of her own heart."

Of such a character were the suggestions of Tarak, and they easily led to the result, on the mind of the princess above alluded to. She resolved however, once more to try the disposition of her nobles; but their adherence to their former sentiments inflamed her indignation to the utmost, and the discovery of a plot against the life of Tarak, determined her to put her design into execution. Nothing could exceed the frankness and loyalty that had distinguished Bokar since his return to the capital; but tyrants will rather forgive those who have injured them, than view without suspicion such as themselves have injured: he had accordingly ever been looked on with a jealous eye by Sophis, from the moment that monarch ceased to be guided by Kephrenes.

Every act of tyranny, every deviation from virtue must widen the gulph that separates the vicious despot from a powerful vassal, who still treads the path of rectitude. But when Kephrenes and Pharas were slain, and when the honour of Sphendris had been assaulted, the remembrance of the trampled subject, the wounded friend, and the insulted husband, became the image which had tormented the last hours of Sophis, dashing with bitterness the sweetest banquet, and infusing discord into the most rapturous concert. Yet Bokar never violated his allegiance ; and the act of treason or patriotism which had cut short the life of his monarch, had been perpetrated without his connivance or even his knowledge. Nevertheless he and his party were still obnoxious\* to Nitocris and her principal courtiers,—since vice is ever adverse to virtue, and the consciousness her brother had deserved ; made her ready to suspect he had incurred the hatred and hostility of Bokar.

\* Herodotus tells us that Nitocris suspected the nobles of having murdered her brother.—See Euterp.

Such were the circumstances which left the queen open to the insinuations of Tarak;—insinuations which seemed to derive fresh colour from the conspiracy already mentioned. The parties engaged in it had been arrested, and the most rigorous examination instituted into the affair, from a hope that Bokar would be found implicated. Messengers were intercepted, strict interrogation, and even torture were exercised on the conspirators, under pretext of their still concealing their accomplices. But fire and steel are weaker than truth, and the conduct of the general was unimpeached. Yet suspicion, like the moss of the rock can vegetate and increase on the slightest nourishment; nor could all the virtue of Bokar win for him the confidence of his queen. The storm, however, might have been retarded or dispelled, but for the indiscreet zeal of some of his adherents, who, by the abhorrence they too openly displayed of the ascendancy acquired by an Ethiopian, the implacable foe of their country, excited beyond control the jealousy and rage of Nitocris and Tarak, had brought griefs upon Egypt, which made the Nile sweep

onward to the ocean with a stream augmented by the tears of those whom it enriched.

Among the numerous contrivances of art that testified the luxury of the monarchs of Mizraim, was a palace at a short distance from the capital of the most elaborate workmanship and surpassing elegance. All the various powers of the pencil and chisel had here combined their magic graces, and the forms of life and activity, of beauty and of majesty, were depicted in such brilliant colouring, and such consummate taste, that they seemed to hover on the confines of reality and fiction. The splendour of past ages here burst again into existence, and the eye of the astonished spectator forgot, while it looked on the enchanted scene, it was contemplating lifeless marble or a brilliant shadow. Innumerable columns of fairy lightness supported the fabric, to some of which the indefatigable tool of the artist had given the appearance of tall and slender trees, their trunks entwined by climbing plants, and decorated with blossoms that seemed to breathe the fragrance of the forest. Delicious and extensive gardens surrounded



the building, and should the sight become cloyed by so many beauties of art, it might repose at pleasure on the great, the primeval river that pours fertility through the fields of Egypt. In one of these gardens, and not far from the stream itself, a grotto had been excavated at a vast expense from the living rock. Its dimensions were ample, and its decorations costly, and here during the hot months, attended by their favorite courtiers the Egyptian monarchs were accustomed to forget for awhile the fatigues of government, and share for a moment the happiness they diffused.

Into this grotto Nitocris introduced a canal from the Nile, through which, by opening a small flood-gate, the water might be poured into it. The work was executed with the utmost celerity and secrecy, but as the tongues of men are hard to restrain, the artificers who had been employed were strangled by order of Tarak, who greatly distinguished himself in this as in every other part of the transaction by the zeal and dexterity with which he assisted the designs of the queen. Her project so far

completed, Nitocris proclaimed her intention of assembling a hunting party, and giving an entertainment that was to last for some days within the precincts of the Oblivion of Care—as this royal retreat was designated. The most sumptuous preparations were made for the festival, to which were invited those nobles whom the queen and Tarak considered disaffected to their government, and accessory to the death of Sophis.

Bokar and his kindred were especially summoned ; and it was expected that the magnificence of their reception would eclipse in splendor the ordinary grandeur even of the court of Nitocris. The day of the assembly at length arrived, and many of the most powerful of Egypt's nobility entered the domain surrounding the Oblivion of Care. The rarest gems flashed on their robes, and as they bent in adoration towards the all-radiant Nitocris, they seemed like a train of brilliant stars attending in order and brightness a glorious sun. But amid this glittering circle, there was none like Bokar; it was not that his person was

adorned with more splendour than that of his peers : a chain of gold which his own hands had torn from the neck of an Ethiopian general slain in single combat, alone distinguished him. Yet no one who beheld that eye beaming with intellect and courage, and that countenance on whose bright tablet was traced a tale of virtue and of glory, could wonder that Egypt was victorious over her foes, since such a leader had directed her armies.

The chase and several martial exercises occupied the morning, and it had been arranged that the banquet should take place each evening in a different part of the domain, that variety might attend the whole of the entertainment. The first evening it was spread upon the bosom of the Nile itself, where many vessels were collected together, on which was spread a floor of wood covered with the richest carpets. A fence of light iron work surrounded the whole, which was so profusely decorated with flowers as to resemble a floating garden ; here the feast was prepared, and Nitocris, with her guests, were wafted to this

aquatic palace in several galleys brilliantly adorned ; and as the gay pageant shot through the limpid wave, a symphony, wild and touching, breathed from unseen instruments, broke on their senses, and wrapped each heart in delirious delight. The various powers of wine and of song, of the splendour of art, and the grandeur of nature, threw their enchantments over the scene. Every heart felt the reality of mirth, or dissembled to itself the sorrow that was not wholly banished ; nor were the fascinations of beauty wanting to embellish the banquet, for besides the train of Egypt's queen, many of the female connections of the nobility had been invited to the entertainment ; and the powerful though silent language of the soul responded from bright eyes with ineffable eloquence to the harps of poets, who told, amid a wild cadence of chords and melody, the triumphs of Mizraim.

The sun at length set, and a brilliant day was succeeded by darkness ; but who shall describe the glories of that night, or depict the scene displayed on the Nile ? The subject repre-

sented was the great victory gained over the Ethiopians, which had obliged them to retreat, whose flying host was described in the most vivid manner, the whole being made visible by the light of innumerable torches. Suddenly the scene changed to the Ethiopian capital, where was discovered the monarch mourning over his fallen chieftains and routed bands. The light was now extinguished, and through the darkness, which succeeded, was heard the wild and pathetic song that lamented their fate.

Once more the scene changed, and Osiris, the guardian divinity of Egypt, shot along the Nile in a triumphal and illuminated car of vast dimensions, when suddenly, amid a crash of a thousand cymbals, a burning arrow, launched like lightning from an engine, ignited the moving fabric, in which was concealed a large quantity of naphtha ; a volume of flame rushed upwards to the sky, whilst the statue of the divinity, being formed of metal, remained visible and uninjured by the cataracts of fire which poured upon the stream.

Here they were unextinguished, for the oily matter not mixing with the water, flowed onwards along the surface in fantastic forms of brightness.

Such was the splendid magnificence that distinguished the first day of this royal entertainment ;—a second and a third passed, marked by scenes and decorations equally grand and diversified. Suspicion, if it ever existed, was now lulled in every breast, and every heart was abandoned to pleasure. The fourth sun arose, and Nitocris determined this day should see the execution of her design. Tarak and the queen watched the declining sun with deep solicitude, and when evening approached, the former sought the grotto in which the banquet was to be held, to examine the terrible arrangements within it,—unknown to all save himself and Nitocris.

It happened that among the attendants of Bokar, there was an Ethiopian, named Kusar, whom the general had found on the field of battle in the last stage of exhaustion. He had used every effort to restore him, and when

at length this was accomplished, offered him the means of returning to his country ; but the Ethiopian, astonished on the one hand at the generosity which had proffered liberty to one who might lawfully have been enslaved, and fearing on the other, to rejoin his countrymen, whose reproaches he dreaded for having surrendered himself, however involuntarily to the enemy, intreated Bokar that he might remain. The latter consented, and thus of a national enemy, gained a zealous friend and an active attendant. This man had followed him to the entertainment of Nitocris, and had, during the chase of the day been examining the various gardens belonging to the Oblivion of Care. To him every thing around presented some novelty, and he explored with avidity every part of the domain.

As he thus rambled onwards, with chance for his guide, he approached the grotto, the entrance of which was open, and struck with the splendid preparations for the evening banquet, entered the wonderful excavation. Here he surveyed with breathless astonishment the

colossal proportions and magnificent decorations of this palace of the rock ; and when he gazed upon the pictures, on which was pourtrayed the humiliation of his country, his heart throbbed with emotions forgotten, and unsheathing his dagger, he pointed it at the breast of an Egyptian chieftain, and for a moment regretted he had not rather fallen beneath the valour, than survived through the generosity of Bokar.

Absorbed in these reflections, the day had declined unperceived, and he was still deeply engrossed by the images of the past, when he was aroused by the entrance of Tarak. He was himself screened from view behind a projecting column, and conceiving, from some angry expressions which escaped him as he closed the vast folding doors at the descent of the grotto, it might by no means be agreeable to him to find it entered by a stranger, till the hour of banquet, he retired still deeper into a recess, and shrouded himself from observation. But there was something in the air of Tarak, which irresistibly attracted his attention, and



he resolved to avail himself of the obscurity in which he was placed, and watch his movements.

In the meantime Tarak having looked round him for a moment, proceeded first to examine the arrangements for the banquet, and next to draw aside a picture which adorned one corner of the retreat. Kusar was unable exactly to discover what it was which there engaged his attention, yet he thought he could perceive the part of the rock, which the picture had formerly concealed, to be hollowed out. Whilst he was endeavouring to ascertain this, one of the folding doors again opened and Nitocris entered unattended. Tarak started at the noise made by opening and reclosing the door, but the form of the queen instantly re-assured him, and they were soon in deep conference.

“Where lies the entrance of the canal?” asked Nitocris.

“Here, great princess,” Tarak replied, (again drawing aside the same picture which he had for a moment replaced,) “I have just viewed the flood-gate; every thing is prepared; within

a few short hours the Nile shall be poured upon the haughty nobles who assassinate one sovereign, and dare to infringe the will of another ; then shall our happiness be as perpetual as it is exquisite : your brother avenged, and your safety secured."

"It is well," answered Nitocris ; "yet is there a something of undefined terror that makes me dread the future, and wish I could arrest our bark upon the stream of time. Corresponding to the importance of an experiment, is the solicitude with which we view it, and I would I could fall into forgetfulness till this portentous night shall be the theme, not of expectation, but of memory."

"Cease, fair Nitocris," replied Tarak, "to afflict yourself with doubts, since it is only by skilfully employing the present, man can hope to reap advantage from the coming hour, nor let my beauteous queen desire for a moment the veil of oblivion, since those bright eyes should wake, and shine for ever to warm and animate the breast of Tarak."

With these words he approached her ; and

while with one arm he embraced her graceful form, Kusar marked the soft glances Nitocris threw upon her lover as she received and returned his caresses. But his mind was fully occupied by the dreadful plot so accidentally disclosed to him, the horror of whose image changed the fair form of Egypt's queen,—made still fairer by the soft light of the lamps which illuminated the grotto,—into a monster, dealing destruction to her race. He panted to escape from his confinement, yet dreaded the slightest movement might betray him, since after what he had heard and seen he was convinced a discovery would be fatal ; he, however, resolved to take the first opportunity that should offer of leaving the grotto, and for this purpose took off his sandals to render his footsteps less audible. This he executed in the utmost silence, yet hardly was it completed, when Nitocris said in a low whisper, “What noise was that ?”

“I heard nothing,” replied Tarak, “but it seems probable the guests are approaching, since the hour of banquet draws near.”

Kusar, whom the suspicion of the queen had thrown into the utmost alarm, felt relieved at these words ; but his heart again palpitated when the queen replied :—

“It may be so ; yet, methinks, it came from within : our artists execute well, but life is still wanting to our statues.”

At this moment, music and voices were heard in the vicinity, and Tarak said :

“You see, fair princess, my supposition was right ; they are seeking the retreat of the rock, and it was, doubtless, one of those sounds you heard. This hour, therefore, we must part, but it is that we may be united for ever.”

They now walked up the ascent leading to the entrance, still engaged in a dialogue, which the increasing distance, prevented Kusar from overhearing ; they opened the folding doors and vanished : yet, ere they reclosed them, Nitocris shot one glance backwards into the subterraneous hall, and Kusar thought he could discern on her countenance a slight suspicion, as if the noise she had heard still rung upon her ear.

At length, however, the portal was shut, and he again breathed freely; he was, indeed, still a captive, but he had, at least, the whole range of his prison, and he doubted not attendants would soon come to complete the final arrangements, and afford him an opportunity to escape. In order the better to take advantage of any such occurrence, he left the retreat he then occupied, and placed himself in another, so situated, near one of the folding doors, that he would be behind it when open, and thus concealed from him who should enter; not, however, till he had first ascertained it was impossible to open them from within, which led him to conclude they were fastened by a spring—the secret of which was known to Nitocris and Tarak only.

He had not remained long in this last station before he heard footsteps, and the next moment some attendants entered, as he had foreseen, and, leaving the egress open, proceeded to the inner part of the hall; where, seeing them busied in various arrangements, Kusar,

with a foot light and swift, escaped into open day. Fortunately no one was near the spot, from which he hastened to some distance, to avoid being seen in its vicinity. Yet the intended perfidy of the queen wrought fearfully on his mind, and he employed every effort to discover Bokar, and save him, if possible, from the fate that awaited him. But the domain was ample, and he sought his patron in vain. Meanwhile the sun was already in the horizon, and he well knew the hour of banquet was arrived; at this moment he heard a voice, and found himself accosted by one of the domestics of the palace. Wholly regardless of what he said, he enquired eagerly for Bokar.

“Bokar!” echoed the attendant, “where should he be if not at the banquet in the grotto? I saw him myself descend thither amidst our nobles; a thousand lamps blaze around them, and the harmony of a thousand instruments welcomed their approach.”

“Great Osiris!” interrupted Kusar, “what do you tell me?”

“And wherefore this perturbation?” replied his informant.

Kusar saw his indiscretion, and replied:—  
“Can we suffer so splendid a scene to be acted, and not hasten ourselves to be spectators? I will to the festive hall, for every moment already accuses me, by its silent flight, of having delayed to behold the majestic Tarak and Nitocris,—greatest and brightest of objects,—seated in yonder palace, the centre of all eyes, and the admiration of every heart.”

Thus saying, he rushed towards the grotto, leaving the Egyptian domestic amazed at his vehemence. Kusar easily found access to the banquet as one of Bokar’s train, and failed not to display the utmost astonishment, both in his looks and gestures, at every thing he saw around him, as if he had never before entered the subterraneous retreat. The presence of Tarak and the queen somewhat relieved the weight that pressed upon his mind; for he felt the catastrophe of the tragedy could not take place whilst they remained. Yet, though he endeavoured to dissemble, in his countenance, the

emotions of his heart, his eyes involuntarily pursued the queen, whose slightest movement he regarded with intense anxiety, lest it should be the presage of the intended violence.

The hours passed along with the utmost festivity; yet, in the imagination of Kusar, the fragrance of the aromatic gums that burnt around him was converted into the effluvium of the tomb, and the most rapturous strains of music into the impetuous rush of water. But his torture almost surpassed endurance when, at midnight, Nitocris rose, and, together with all the ladies who had graced the scene, prepared to leave the grotto. The fatal secret almost burst from his lips, yet he restrained the tide of his feelings: the goblet had flowed with unexampled freedom, and he perceived nearly all the nobles fast approaching towards intoxication; yet Bokar was still master of himself, and he resolved, at least, to endeavour his rescue.

A short time after the queen had withdrawn, a human mummy,\* the sacred representation

\* At the Egyptian banquets it was the custom to in-



of death, was introduced, according to the usage of Egypt, and the customary exhortation uttered aloud to enjoy the fleeting hour : when this ceremony was concluded, Tarak arose and entreated his guests to pardon his momentary absence, since he was about to present some novelty for their diversion. All, except Bokar, had now surrendered themselves to inebriety, and he had himself only escaped by the dexterous management of Kusar, who had frequently unseen diluted the draughts he administered to his patron. A vacant smile of acquiescence met the proposal of Tarak, and he proceeded to ascend towards the entrance of the hall. A thousand different plans had coursed each other in rapid succession through the mind of Kusar, and he was still undecided as to the best method of snatching the devoted Bokar from destruction, when the departure of Tarak informed him that deliberation must now

produce a mummy, or a model of one ; and, as it was successively presented to each of the guests, the following exhortation was delivered :—" Behold this, and drink, for thou shalt, hereafter, be thyself thus."

give way to action. He, accordingly, approached his patron, and whispered to him that Sphendris, he had just been informed, was seized by a violent and sudden indisposition, and that he ought immediately to quit the banquet.

Bokar arose, and, whilst he was making a brief apology, the indefatigable Kusar hastened, with a throbbing heart, in pursuit of Tarak; he overtook him at the entrance of the hall, the door of which he was about to close, At this critical moment Kusar went up to him, and said in a low voice :—

“Bokar, my patron, bids me tell great Tarak he has guessed his design.”

These words awoke the utmost terror in the mind of the minister; yet he mastered himself sufficiently to ask, with tolerable composure, what design was meant? Kusar pointed to a small alcove at a slight distance, as if he desired to speak privately, whither Tarak instantly retired, in still greater alarm. But his fears were immediately allayed when Kusar at length said :—

“It is suspected you intend, to-night, to represent again the triumph of Egypt over Ethiopia, and my patron recommends some other subject, for the sake of variety.”

A man who awakes from a vision of terror to a reality of happiness, cannot feel greater transport than Tarak experienced at the sequel of this discourse ; and he answered promptly, he should ill requite the honour conferred by the presence of so many of Egypt’s nobles, if he neglected to diversify the entertainment to the uttermost.

Whilst this was passing, Bokar, as Kusar had ardently hoped, anxious as soon as possible to rejoin Sphendris, came to the entrance of the grotto, the door of which Tarak had in his panic left open ; the attendants were all engaged in endeavouring to make out, with their eyes and ears, the errand of Kusar ; and the Egyptian general passed unperceived by any, except his faithful Ethiopian, who distinguished, with joyful certainty, his firm and rapid footstep.

Meanwhile the conference ended ; Tarak

hastened to execute his fatal project, and the blood of Kusar ran cold as he saw him close the folding doors, which he knew could not be opened from within. He lost not a moment in pursuing and overtaking Bokar, to whom he shortly communicated the dreadful fate from which he had escaped, but which threatened to engulf the rest of the unhappy nobles. Sickening and appalled at the fearful narration, Bokar returned to the grotto, resolved, if possible, to force the entrance, and either liberate the wretched Egyptians, or share their doom. But the hands of the brave cannot always achieve the generous purposes of their hearts. Bokar shook the obdurate gates with a force that his despair rendered prodigious ; but rocks and iron were opposed to him, and every effort was abortive. He shouted, again and again, to the guests within, till each echo told wildly the tale of the perfidy of Nitocris ; he called upon the queen and upon Tarak ; he threatened, he supplicated ; and when at length from exhaustion he was silent, and when nothing replied save the wind sighing fitfully

through the trees, tears of agony broke from his eyes ; and, leaving the spot, he went in pursuit of Tarak. But treachery was destined to triumph. The flood-gate was opened ; the Nile poured into the fatal grotto—and a sigh may escape from the Egyptian historian while candour obliges him to blacken the page of his annals with an event that converted a hall of banquet into a sepulchre.

Yet crime does not always reap the harvest it proposes, and Tarak was himself overwhelmed in the storm he had awakened. The unhappy Bokar, after having in vain pursued him for some time, returned almost unconsciously towards the grotto. Kusar attended and watched him with the tenderest assiduity ; for he saw the violence of his emotions, and the almost total aberration of his intellect. The impetuosity of his feelings had indeed brought on, for a moment, that species of forgetfulness of his unhappiness which is the delirium of despair ; but he was again aroused to torture, when, on arriving at the entrance of the fearful hall, he heard the rush of the resistless stream that

announced the promiscuous, though bloodless, slaughter of his kindred. His first effort, on this, was to draw his dagger, which he would instantly have plunged into his heart, if Kusar had not arrested his hand, exclaiming at the same time :

“ Alas ! great Bokar, think of your Sphendris, pity Egypt, and reserve that dagger for the breast of Tarak, whose blood may yet be a balsam for the wounds of this afflicted country.”

Bokar struggled for a moment, and, pointing to his breast, seemed to entreat Kusar to put an end to his woes ; but soon a temporary oblivion fell upon his mind, and his faithful attendant bore him to some distance from the cave of destruction. Few were the screams that reached the outer air, for intoxication had left the nobles easy victims to their fate ;—and soon all was again silence.

In the meantime, Tarak having completed his abominable design, as he was returning to consult with Nitocris upon their next step, approached that part of the garden where Kusar had already partly succeeded in soothing and

restoring his patron's mind. It was scarcely an hour past midnight, when, by the light of a large torch he carried, Tarak beheld two figures in a shady recess. In some astonishment he paused to examine them, when Bokar, who had heard his footstep from the alcove, darting at him a lightning glance, exclaimed :

“Messenger of Typhon, behold me and tremble.”

The Ethiopian's limbs were palsied ; for he thought he saw a spectre ; but in a moment recollecting himself, and not being able to unravel the mysterious escape of Bokar, and dreading his design had become known, and that some or all of the nobles,—he knew not by what means, were at liberty, unsheathed his dagger and buried it in his own bosom.

The sun rose, at length, on that disastrous night, and the queen was soon informed of the death of Tarak and the escape of Bokar, who had, ere the day broke, returned with Sphen-dris to the capital. The tortures of remorse are often severe, even when the crime that produces it has conferred the advantage proposed ;

but the treachery of the queen of Egypt had been more than unsuccessful ; since it had occasioned the fall of Tarak and the certain enmity of Bokar. The clamour of an incensed people surrounded the palace ; and the Ethiopian mercenaries, enraged at the loss of their commander, were rather a subject of terror than of hope. Conscience has ever been a terrible avenger of guilt ; and history relates that the unhappy Nitocris sought, in a voluntary death, a refuge from herself and the vengeance of Egypt ; leaving her story a beacon, on the ocean of time, that warns monarchs to shun the conduct, if they would avoid the fate, of tyrants.



THE STORY OF SESOSTRIS,  
IN ARABIA.

IF our free agency is no more than an empty boast—if in the moral as in the physical world, the relation of cause and effect is immutable, many of the accusations levelled against fortune apply, with greater justice, to ourselves. The present moment is often the germ of the most complicated events ; even as the gigantic oak lies, in fairy minuteness, beneath the integument of the acorn. The seed is at our disposal ; we may suffer it to expire, or we may plant and rear it till its offspring, an armed vessel, shall be trusted with the lives and destinies of mankind. Thus it is, like-

wise, with the actions of life ; a judicious arrangement of which may often cause what we denominate chance to be lost in certainty, and change the vagueness of conjecture into the reality of well grounded anticipation.

It was by thus improving the opportunities and resources he possessed, the father of the great Sesostris enabled that prince to run a career of conquest so swift, that its laurels were twined upon a brow still youthful ; so extensive that the same hand, bound the chain of slavery, and extorted tribute from the Ganges to the Atlantic, and from the farthest Ethiopia to the Euxine sea.

Moeris was the last of a long succession of Egyptian monarchs, the earliest of whom, even to that ancient period, glimmered from afar in the mysterious twilight of departed ages, with the solemnity of a former world. Egypt had not always been invincible, and many of her rulers were weak ; but nature had protected her favourite region with mountains, deserts, and the sea ; and if these barriers had ever been surmounted, the storm was transitory,

and Mizraim still advanced in greatness. Many cities had arisen to adorn her, and, above all, unrivalled Thebes filled a plain of many miles, stretching from both banks of the Nile to the Lybian and Arabian chain of mountains respectively in the district where these ridges bend, the one to the east, the other to the west ; while the mighty river, brightly reflecting her obelisks and palaces, flowed proudly onward between these her twin matchless daughters. To this splendour Mœris greatly added, by rearing up a magnificent entrance to the temple of Vulcan, and a lake, or rather, sea, planned and executed by this monarch, converted a parched desert into an inexhaustible reservoir, filled by a stupendous canal, from the Nile, whose waters might thus, a second time, be diffused over the country. In this lake, two pyramids, the work of the same monarch, raised their awful summits far above the water ; while their bases, at an equal depth beneath its surface, were shrouded in obscurity.

But though magnificent works may display the power and genius, it is the love of his sub-

jects which must constitute the happiness and true greatness of a monarch ; and, in this point, Mœris was surpassed by few. He had already reigned some years, when, as he reposed one day within the delicious grotto situated in the suburbs of Thebes, near the Lybian mountains, one of his courtiers informed him a messenger from the Priest of Heliopolis had tidings of great importance to communicate. Mœris commanded him to be speedily introduced, and received the sacred deputy with the utmost respect : the softest cushions were spread for his reception, and the choicest refreshments set before him. But the celestial annunciations of which he was the bearer absorbed his soul ; and, after taking a draught of wine and a few dates, he thus addressed the ruler of Egypt :

“ Let the mighty Mœris listen to my communication ; for its tale is of the future, and it bears the impress of the gods. There are moods, incidental to the mind, when pictures arise in it so exquisitely coloured by the imagination as to annihilate every hope of their ever becoming embodied in facts ; but if, by

any caprice of fortune, these bright suggestions of fancy should be re-echoed by real occurrences, an ecstasy is produced which must be felt in order to be appreciated. I stood on the shores of the Nile—the prince of rivers—whose cradle is amongst the sands of the desert, and whose streams are the wealth of empires ; the bréeses that whispered among the acacias were cool and fragrant, and the last rays of the sun spread over the towers of Heliopolis a canopy of liquid gold ; when, turning my eyes to the eastward, I observed, at a measureless distance in the horizon, a dark speck advancing at the speed of a thunderbolt ; in an instant I perceived that it was a bird, and, at first imagined it to be an eagle ; I discovered that I was mistaken ; and a thrill of delight and astonishment, nearly amounting to frenzy, passed through my mind, on perceiving it was the Phoenix—the inhabitant of five centuries—whose natal hour might be coeval with the birth of an empire, and its extinction subsequent to its fall. It came, cleaving the skies, with a vigour that seemed to claim nothing

less than eternity for its existence. In one of its talons it bore the fragrant sarcophagus\* of its ancestor; and its eye, that flamed like a star, was fixed, in mute adoration, on the expiring splendours of the orb of day. I felt as though I could have prostrated myself before the worshipper. He passed;—for a moment I still saw the waving of his tempest wings, still fed my glance on his glowing plumes, and, when at length he plunged from my sight towards the great shrine which adorns Heliopolis I remained still gazing upon the pathless air, the space abandoned by a being of wonder, an orbit quitted by its planet. Astonished at what I had seen, I sought the Fane, the priests of which were not ignorant that the great Phœnix had appeared; yet were they chiefly occupied by an important oracle, just

\* The Phœnix is said only to have appeared in Egypt when it came to the Temple of Heliopolis, there to inter its ancestor, whom it conveyed from Arabia, in a receptacle of myrrh constructed by itself.—See Herodotus' Euterpe.

uttered by the divinity which affected the destinies of Egypt. This oracle I was instructed to announce, and may its import be propitious."

With these words the venerable stranger presented a small roll of papyrus, and almost immediately withdrew. Mœris read the communication, which was as follows:—

"When the desert shall become a sea, then let the whole earth tremble; for the son of that monarch who creates islands shall conquer the world."

Then followed the interpretation given by the priests, who had, with great reason, applied it to Mœris, and his successor, yet unborn; since the former, by the construction of the vast lake and pyramids within it, above mentioned, corresponded well with the prince described by the oracle.

The utmost joy was diffused over Egypt when the brilliant fate, which awaited her, became generally known; but that joy was increased to ecstasy when the queen gave birth to a son, who was afterwards named Sesostris.

Entertainments and illuminations expressed the public delight, while Mœris exerted himself to assist as far as possible, by the most judicious arrangements, the bright promises of destiny. The two principle means of conquest are warriors and treasure; the latter of which may be amassed by economy and a skilful management of the finances, but the former is the growth of habit and education; and Mœris when he beheld his flourishing but unwarlike people, reflected, with a sigh, that if he had himself to achieve the conquest of the world, he must have vainly sought in Egypt an adequate number of followers. The enthusiasm of a moment may be sufficient to unsheath, but it is true courage only which can sustain and wield the sword in an arduous and protracted war.

Of this, Mœris was conscious; and, accordingly, issued a proclamation that all male children, born on the same day with Sesostris, should be brought up in the same martial exercises and warlike education as their prince; a measure which was superintended throughout



Egypt by persons appointed for the purpose, as the monarch imagined that none would be more fit to follow his son through a career of toil and glory, than those in whom a similarity of habits, with their sovereign, had engendered the sympathy of brothers.

In the meantime, the young Sesostris exhibited, from his earliest years, many proofs that he was the favourite of destiny. The growth both of his mind and body was rapid, and almost supernaturally great. At an early age he could bend the largest Ethiopian bow, and wound an animal, with the arrow, in the heart, the head, or the eye, at pleasure—whether the game were in motion or stationary ; the most impetuous steeds were obedient to his rein ; and he could swim, in a suit of light armour, across the wildest torrent. The sacred sparrow-hawk\* often rested over his head when he was engaged in the chase ; and it was rumoured that while he slept a wreath

\* The hawk was sacred to Osiris, the guardian divinity of Egypt.

of fire, exhaling an aromatic perfume, frequently surrounded his brows, a brilliant emblem of the diadem of the world, that should one day adorn him. But it was the depth of his genius, the greatness of his conceptions and his reverence for virtue, which, more than all other accomplishments ennobled him, and rendered him beloved at once by the military and sacred order, as well as the whole nation at large. Time rolled onwards; and the infant blossom was ripened into the hero and the prince; yet history declares that blossom was shaken by storms; for it describes his father, Mœris, the victim\* of temporary mis-

\* The misfortune here spoken of was the invasion of the Palli, which is by some supposed to have taken place a little before the accession of Sesostris or Rameses; and by which his predecessor is said to have been driven from his throne. That predecessor has been called Amenophis, a title which is supposed to signify, "Beloved of Ammon," and which, probably being nothing but a cognomen, might easily belong to the same person, who is, in Herodotus, named Meres.—See the story of Rameses.

fortunes, during the childhood of Sesostris. Yet, if oppressed, the former was never wholly subdued; and the tide of war, which harassed for a moment the fields of Mizraim, was rolled backwards, with a terrible reaction, on her foes.

When Sesostris and his warrior companions appeared sufficiently versed in their warlike studies, and confirmed in bodily strength, Mœris, reflecting that actual war was the best school for a soldier, despatched the prince against the Arabians, as a trial of his abilities. Sesostris embraced the project with ardour, and proceeded immediately to make the necessary preparations. A body of forty thousand foot, a thousand chariots, and four thousand horse were selected; all useless incumbrances were avoided, and the retinue of the prince himself, consisted only of a physician, named Menros, and a few attendants, among whom was one of the Pallic race, named Pakaris, who had been taken captive when a child. Mœris had given him his freedom; but gratitude still bound him to Egypt, and his address and fi-

delity had recommended him to the young prince.

There was also in the number of his followers, an Egyptian, named Anisis, whose qualifications rendered him invaluable to Sesostris. At once a poet, and a man of science, and skilled either to instruct or please, he was equally fitted to assist at a council, or grace a banquet, and some time spent in travelling, aided by industry and much genius, had added to his other accomplishments an extensive knowledge and a fluency in the languages spoken by the nations around Egypt. Such accordingly, were the three principal followers who, with only a few more, formed the private retinue of the Egyptian prince on his Arabian expedition.

The campaign was opened in the spring, and the proud Arabs, who had never been subdued, beheld at least with solicitude the approaching war. But a want of unanimity greatly paralyzed their efforts, and Sesostris occupied several important posts without resistance, till by the vicinity of danger they were taught the

necessity of prompt and vigorous opposition. Several of the chieftains accordingly laid aside their differences, and their combined forces formed an army more numerous than that of the Egyptian prince.

But Sesostris, confident in the assurances of fate, and the valour and devotion of his followers, prepared with alacrity for the battle, and perceiving by far the greater part of the enemy's troops were horsemen, in whose evolutions consisted their chief strength, he commanded half his army to aim their arrows at the horses, and the other half at their riders, having first set apart one division only to be employed in pursuing the Arabians, whenever as their custom was, they should wheel round in momentary flight, intending still to renew the contest.

By this arrangement Sesostris hoped to preserve the vigour of his main body through a whole day, and at the same time reap all the advantage of this temporary flight and disorder of the enemy.

The sun was setting when the armies came

in sight, and both parties felt with regret the battle must be deferred till morning. The Egyptian prince, unable to sleep, and eager to show his valour and conduct, rode forth, attended only by Pakaris, to survey as nearly as possible the hostile camp. The love of adventure was strongly interwoven in his nature, and the bright though flickering glare of the enemy's fires, the hum of the encampment, and the wild cries of the centinels to each other, wrought his ardent imagination to the highest excitement, and the hours still intervening ere he should draw his sword, seemed a blank in his existence.

But there were two beings in the Egyptian camp who viewed the coming day with very different sentiments ; these were Anisis and the physician, for whom, notwithstanding their admiration of the son of Mœris, a battle possessed no attractions ; the latter especially had been much alarmed by the suggestions of Pakaris, who, being well acquainted with the timid character of Menros, had diverted himself at his expense by giving most appalling

accounts of the numbers and valour of the enemy. He had accordingly sought the tent of Anisis, who very gladly saw him enter, being himself in no small state of perturbation, and as the sun had already set three hours, he invited the physician to sup with him, remarking at the same time in a sad tone, it might be the last meal they should ever eat together.

“Alas !” replied the physician, (heaving a deep sigh as he took his seat) “you might have said the last we may eat at all, if the dreadful tales I have heard from Pakaris be correct ; I myself would bend a bow against an ordinary enemy, but they say every one of these Arabians bears a quiver in which an Egyptian could stand, and darts seven arrows at once from the same string, and that many of the chiefs think there is no greater relish in the world than human blood. You, Anisis,” he continued, “have travelled in these regions, and are therefore probably acquainted with such matters.”

“I have indeed travelled in Arabia,” answered Anisis, “but never saw the nation at

war,—a sight which I always took especial care to avoid,—and cannot therefore give you much information on their mode of fighting. I do not, however imagine, they can discharge seven arrows at once from one bow ; yet I do not think we gain much by this, if report speaks truth, which declares they can impel a shaft with such force as to pierce seven men, if standing in a line.”

“ Woe is me,” interrupted the physician, “ how shall we escape ?”

“ I know not,” replied Anisis, “ unless we throw ourselves on the ground the instant we hear the twang of the bow-string.”

Something now fell down in an adjoining tent, and the physician started with terror when the former proceeded :

“ As to the part of your story regarding human blood, I can only say, Osiris grant ours may not compose the sauce. But let us drink, Menros, for to-morrow we shall have much to endure.” Thus they passed three hours of the night, when both went to repose.

Menros awoke, however, before sun-rise, and



again repaired to the tent of Anisis, whom he found already risen, and examining his arms, and almost at the same instant they were joined by Pakaris, who, judging of the physician's feelings by the paleness of his countenance, amused himself as before, by painting in exaggerated colours the dreadful nature of the enemy.

“ I have scarcely slept an hour,” he said, “ having been engaged the whole night with our great prince, who, unable to await the dawn of day, has been riding about yonder camp ; and terrible are the tokens I have seen of the strength of the Arabians. As we passed along,” he continued, “ I observed by the indistinct light of their watch-fires, something which I conceived to be a small uprooted tree, when suddenly I was astonished to find it was a club, which a centinel raised and wielded with as much ease as I would a twig. But see, the sun is rising, whose setting beams will behold our prince so much nearer the accomplishment of his fate which has promised him a subjugation of the earth.”

“ And they may behold us under the earth,” said the physician.

“ How !” interrupted Pakaris, “ do you then dread the coming contest ? what, though their arrows are swift and resistless ? what, though their swords are so well tempered and ponderous, as to divide with the same stroke, both armour, and the warrior that wears it ? Do not we possess valor ?”

How far Pakaris might have succeeded in infusing courage into the hearts of Menros and Anisis, it is difficult to estimate, for at that moment the sun arose, and all three immediately hastened to the tent of their prince. Both armies were speedily arrayed, the war-shout raised, and the engagement begun. Battles have always been the same, and earth has so often drunk the blood of her children, as to render the student of history sadly familiar with their details. The Arabians were animated by a love of freedom and hereditary valor, while the Egyptians were excited by the desire of conquest, and still farther by the resolution and confidence of Sesostris. That

resolution and that confidence might have been fruitless, if they had not been supported by the skilful arrangement of his forces above alluded to. It was this circumstance that, from the beginning, threw the advantage on the side of Egypt, and displayed the superiority of tactics and discipline over the efforts of impetuous courage.

At the first onset the Arabian arrows and those of the Egyptians were discharged with some loss on both sides, but at the next moment, the division to whom the service had been allotted by Sesostris, aimed their shafts at the enemy's horses, and the Arabs were astonished and confounded to perceive a large proportion of their troops then in action, thrown in disorder to the ground by their wounded or dying steeds; and ere they could rally, the Egyptians suddenly opened, and a line of war chariots prepared for the purpose rushed from behind, and swept them to destruction. Yet the Arabians called to mind the utility of their evolutions, and instantly wheeled about with the intention of returning

with greater numbers from the rear, on the army of Sesostris. But the plan of that prince again took effect, and they were harassed in their retreat by troops, who, together with their horses, were fresh and unwearied.

They returned, however, to the charge, but it was only to sustain new havoc, and to increase the confidence of the Egyptians by displaying the skill of their incomparable leader. Yet the shame felt by the Arabians, and their horror of defeat, still continued the contest, which genius had decided; and the day was almost passed before they were compelled to quit the disastrous field. But the same obstinacy which had delayed, marked with greater destruction their loss of the battle, and strewed the plains of Arabia with the bravest of her sons. Sesostris beheld with delight the triumph of his arms, and resolved not to lose by delay the fruit of his valour and conduct, pressed eagerly forward to subjugate the country.

The Arabs, however, were unconquered, since their spirit was unbroken; while the calamity

they had already sustained, taught them the power of their foe, and the necessity of vigorous measures. All feuds were accordingly suspended, and an army more numerous and potent than the former, warned Sesostris that fresh laurels must be won; or that those already gained must be torn from his brow. But one battle already lost, diminished the confidence of the Arabs, while on the side of the Egyptians the valour of heroes was invincible, since it was united to the sympathy of brothers, and directed by the masterly hand of the son of Mœris. A second victory crushed the hopes of the Arabians, and opened their territory to its conqueror, almost without any possibility of longer defence. Sesostris accordingly marched through the country, compelling all in his passage to fly or yield.

The Arabs hoped the desert, to which they retired, would protect, and enable them to rally their shattered forces ; but their conqueror was as prompt as he had been successful, and immediately prepared to penetrate that region. Its secret fountains were revealed to

him by deserters ; but the blast of the simoom, was an enemy against whose malignity and swiftness, the utmost vigilance and resolution could scarcely protect his army, and though he was still invincible, and every where extorted obedience, he found his forces much weakened by the ravages of occasional desultory contests, and incessant fatigues.

The Arabian gulph was however open, and he resolved, having already overrun all the sandy region, to refresh his soldiers, and receive fresh supplies from Egypt, ere he proceeded to attack what yet remained ;—and an encampment was accordingly fortified. Yet although this delay was unavoidable, the son of Mœris could not rest inactive, and he determined with a small division of his army, which was still effective, to penetrate the fertile district of Arabia that lay before him ; in order to explore the difficulties he would have to encounter. Of the Arab chieftains, several of the most valiant had fallen, together with their followers, in the two battles which had confirmed the power of Sesostris ; a few had been

detached by Egyptian intrigue from the common cause, and those who still remained unconquered by the sword or policy of the enemy, retired into the richest part of their country, and endeavoured to take advantage of the temporary pause made by the invader to collect and organize the resources still left them.

Among these chiefs was Tephra, the superiority of whose genius pointed him out to his countrymen, as the one most fit in the present emergency to direct their counsels, and stem the torrent of their misfortunes. But the advance of Sesostris, though only with a fragment of his army, threw them into the utmost alarm, and had they not been aided by the spirit and conduct of Tephra, they would probably have submitted without striking a blow. That leader strove by every means to revive the courage of his followers, occupied the most defensible posts, and prepared with a select body of troops to harrass Sesostris on his march. He even succeeded in drawing the Egyptian prince into an ambuscade, where

himself, together with his whole division, was in danger of being cut off or made prisoners. The son of Mœris deplored the inconstancy of fortune, or the facility with which he had allowed himself to be entrapped, yet his valour and that of his followers sustained an unequal contest, till the darkness of night enabled him to extricate himself, though with considerable loss from the threatened destruction. The hope of the Arabian was revived by this success, yet Tephraan shuddered when he reflected on the courage with which the Egyptians had maintained the battle under every disadvantage ; and if experience renders valour more terrible, his followers had perhaps little reason to rejoice in their victory. Sesostris, however, was checked in his spirit of adventure, and retreated leisurely towards his main encampment.

In the meantime the Arabians resolved to gain as much as possible by their late good fortune, and for this purpose fortified a camp in the post they then occupied, which appeared to their great leader and the rest of the chief-



tains particularly defensible ; and in order still farther to ensure a present superiority in the field, a considerable reinforcement was summoned from the more distant part of the region still in their possession. Yet Tephra reflected that though he had checked, he had not vanquished Sesostris ; and considering the various chances of a protracted war, he resolved as soon as possible to place in comparative safety the being in whom all his affections centered, and who, even more than his country's welfare, engaged his utmost solicitude. That being was Mora, his only daughter, whose amiable disposition, and true nobility of soul, could not but obtain a high ascendancy in every virtuous breast, and who was doubly dear to her father, since her birth had cost the life of his consort.

He accordingly selected from his followers a valiant band, headed by his brother, to conduct her to an encampment in the farthest district of Arabia, near the coast of the southern ocean, and endeavoured with words of affection to remove, or at least alleviate, the grief

she experienced in the anticipation of this measure.

“Sixteen summers,” he said, “have rolled away, since the gods first bestowed thee upon me,—the brightest of their gifts; during which period thou hast been as my shadow, giving the highest touch to my happiness while we were fortunate; and since the Egyptian destroyer has invaded our country, soothing with thy presence the sorrow of my heart, and elevating my fortitude by the example of thy magnanimity. Yet even this happiness may not last, since I cannot behold thee needlessly exposed to the casualties of war.

“We have, it is true, been partially successful, but the foe is numerous and daring; and in order to make the most of our present advantages, the Egyptians must be harassed—before their numbers are recruited—by sudden and frequent attack, and it is from the constant danger of this desultory warfare, I wish to extricate thee.

“The farthest region of the south may not long be tranquil,—for it is hard to check the

career of our invader, but if our chiefs are unanimous, he may yet learn to tremble at our valour.

“Farewell, then, beloved Mora, and remember, that as laughter is sometimes the prelude to tears, sighs are in like manner often destined to be the harbingers of joy.

“If I live, we shall meet again, and if I fall, my last thought shall be thine.

“Thy noble uncle will conduct thee to the post most distant from the present seat of war, and will protect thee there. He is virtuous and valiant; the dread of our enemies, and the favourite of the gods. Nor will I fail to apprise thee of our fortune by swift and faithful messengers, as opportunity shall render practicable.”

With these words he embraced his daughter, who soon after left the encampment. The best efforts of prudence are sometimes baffled by events, and our projects occasionally hasten the calamities they are intended to avert.

Sesostris, after the check he had received, was apprized of the reinforcement expected by

the Arabians, and ever bent on revenging that disaster, had with a small body of troops taken a circuit round the camp of Tephra, in order, if possible, to intercept the intended supply, whilst the main division of the Egyptian army still retreated towards their principal station,—a manœuvre which was executed early in the same day, on the evening of which Mora left the Arabian camp. The Egyptians fell in with no Arab reinforcement, but they encountered the escort conducting the daughter of the Arabian chief.

Sesostris, himself, was the first to perceive the enemy, and exhorted his warrior band to obliterate their former misfortune, and follow him to victory. That exhortation was needless, and his soldiers displayed by the fury of their charge, the sympathy of their feelings with his own. The brother of Tephra sustained the contest till his horse was slain, and his ankle dislocated in the fall, when his troops were thrown into disorder. Sesostris pushed his advantage; and such was the slaughter, that only one Arabian was able to escape with the

disabled brother of Tephra, while Mora became the captive of the Egyptians. Night had now succeeded to day, and Sesostris, satisfied with what he had already achieved, and fearing to be surrounded by the enemy at a distance from the rest of his forces, gave orders to retreat—a measure which his soldiers executed with the utmost despatch, carrying along with them the Arabian princess, overwhelmed with pain and astonishment at this last turn in her fortune.

Meanwhile, the Arab who had escaped with the brother of Tephra from the slaughter of his companions, arrived at the camp of his chief, just as he was making preparations for an attempt on that of the Egyptians. But the dreadful tale, of which he was the bearer, relaxed every arm, and the whole attention of Tephra was turned towards devising some means of recovering Mora, whilst his senses were frozen by the contemplation of the fate to which she might be exposed.

The next day, accordingly, Sesostris was made sensible of the value of his prize, by the

arrival of deputies from the Arabian camp, offering money for the ransom of the daughter of their chieftain. The Egyptian officers were astonished at their good fortune, and intreated their prince to take advantage of so noble a hostage, and at once compel the Arabs to submission. But the son of Mœris revolved greater projects, and answered the emissaries of Tephra, he was making war, not on his own account, but on that of his father, whose people had suffered much from the inhabitants of Arabia, that therefore he was only general, and as such, had no right to give up so distinguished a captive without consulting his monarch. He however, professed his readiness to take this step, tranquillizing at the same time the fears of Tephra, as far as possible, by the most solemn assurances, that his daughter should be treated with the utmost respect during her stay in the Egyptian encampment; and concluded by proposing a suspension of hostilities while this affair was pending. These terms were agreed to by Tephra, since they were the most favourable

which could be obtained, and a messenger was despatched to Thebes, bearing a letter from the Egyptian prince himself, intreating Mœris to leave the daughter of the Arabian chieftain entirely at his disposal.

In the meantime, Mora, the object of these negociations, received the most honourable treatment: her own attendants were allowed unconstrained access, without even the presence of an Egyptian female, and Sesostris hastened, as soon as he imagined she had sufficiently recovered from the shock occasioned by her seizure, to set at rest, as far as possible, any apprehensions she might entertain.

But in the breast of Sesostris, virtue and affection were entwined with the qualifications of a conqueror; and when he presented himself before the princess, when he beheld the beauty of her features in which the graceful timidity of early youth was blended by the inimitable colouring of nature's pencil, with a majesty that displayed the impress of a lofty mind, he felt emotions of obscure import, though almost uncontrollable force which

admonished him that the Being that can fetter the thoughts, and even the will, is the most powerful of all conquerors, and poured into his address, a pathos unknown to himself.

“ Uncertainty, great princess, has ever been an attribute of war ; and the same fortune might have placed me in the power of Tephra, which has now made his daughter a guest, for a time, in our camp. I am ignorant of the maxims of Arabian warfare, but the sons of Mizraim are moderate in the use of success, and I should have instantly dismissed you to your own encampment had I been monarch of Egypt instead of general ; yet Mœris, my great father, is magnanimous, and I doubt not his sentiments will coincide with mine. In the meanwhile, I intreat you to banish every apprehension, for I swear by Osiris, that as long as you honour us with your presence, you shall receive from Sesostris and his officers, the respect they owe their queen. I will not wrong the honour I know you to possess, so far as to place any guard upon your movements. If ever you shall allow me



the happiness of your society, I shall avail myself, with delight, of your condescension, but your privacy shall be inviolable, and your ease and tranquillity our constant study."

To these expressions of courtesy, Mora returned a suitable reply, and henceforth abandoning all fear, calmly awaited the arrival of the messenger from Egypt. That messenger had passed with the utmost speed, over sea and land, and Thebes heard with amazement and rapture, the recital of her triumph and success.

But the affair of the Arabian captive was judged too important for instant decision, and the request of Sesostris, that she might be left to his disposal, met with some objection. It was, however, at length granted by Mæris, with this limitation only, that his son should do nothing hostile to the honour and prosperity of his country, and the bearer of this reply again departed.

During the progress of these transactions, the intimacy of Sesostris and Mora increased daily—a circumstance much favoured by the

eager desire of the princess to gain as much as possible from her present communication with a people so superior to her own countrymen in learning and civilization. Prompted by this desire, she took every opportunity of interrogating the Egyptian prince, who perfectly understood the Arabian language, respecting the various attainments of his nation, especially in their philosophy and views of nature.

Sesostris, on the other hand, was never weary of instructing her; and as he developed the wonderful agency of the universe, expressed in the mysterious language of symbols, and listened in his turn, to the accounts she gave of Arabia, or heard her wild and rapturous songs that spoke a heart of affection and a soul of fire. Mora lost the remembrance of captivity, and Sesostris, the consciousness of freedom. The answer of Moeris at length arrived, leaving his son at liberty to carry into effect his generous desire respecting the princess. He accordingly lost no time in seeking her, and spoke as follows :

“ My emissary, amiable Mora, is returned from Egypt, this papyrus contains the answer of my monarch, and it is such as I anticipated, for it leaves me to act without controul, provided I infringe not the honour and prosperity of my country. Go then, lovely Arabian, thou art free as the gale that sweeps thy native deserts ; return to Tephra<sup>n</sup> and tell him Sesostris would scorn to stipulate conditions for the restoration of a daughter to a father's arms. I know not, he proceeded, what fate may allot me, but if the present war shall cease, if the possession of Arabia and Egypt shall at length content their respective inhabitants, then let Mora look sometimes to the west, and mingle one sigh with the east wind, while Sesostris from the halls of Karnak\* shall bend his eyes towards the rising sun, and dwell with rapture on the remembrance of the daughter of Tephra<sup>n</sup>.”

\* Karnak was one of the principal palaces of Thebes, supposed to have been reared in the age of Rameses, or Sesostris.

In reply, Mora failed not to express her acknowledgment of the courteous hospitality she had experienced from the Egyptians, dwelling especially, in all the rapture and simplicity of nature, on his last act of generosity.

Soon after this, the escort arrived, headed by Tephrahan himself, which was to conduct her to the Arabian camp,—the intention of Sesostris having been already made known,—and after some refreshment, Mora departed surrounded by her joyful countrymen. Her lips responded to their delight, and her eyes met those of her father with the most affectionate sympathy; yet a sadness pressed upon her heart to which she had hitherto been a stranger, and thoughts rose whose meaning she wanted power or courage to unravel, but which taught her, there are fetters for the mind more indissoluble than those of the body, since the latter only overcome the strength, whilst the former can controul the will of their captive.

On arriving again amongst his followers, Tephrahan in the council of the chiefs, advised to make peace, if possible, with Egypt, and

even rather to yield a part of their territory than by continuing a war with so potent and skilful an adversary, risk a total subjugation.

“ Fortune,” he said, “ my countrymen, now smiles on our foes, and a prince of gigantic power leads their armies. But let us cast our eyes back on the history of Egypt : peaceful, indolent and luxurious, when was she formidable to the sons of Arabia ? and is it to be supposed they will instantly forget their nature ? can habits of inaction be laid aside in a moment, or is a nation of warriors the creation of a day ? No, my countrymen ; the Egyptians are the same, and when that Sesostris, whose spirit animates their counsels and strings their nerves to exertion, shall sleep in death, then will they return to the cultivation of their soil and their greatness will be converted to a splendid dream. Let us yield then to the mountain torrent, for the hour of summer shall come, and whilst its roar is hushed in silence, we shall look back with astonishment on our alarm.”

The suggestions of Tephra were, perhaps,

reasonable, but the Arabian resources had been considerably recruited during the truce, and the other chiefs had conceived high hopes, and formed resolutions which, if not wise, were at least courageous. The proposal of pacific measures not only met with disapprobation, but they soon after deprived its author of the principal command—from an idea of his favouring the Egyptian interest; thus voluntarily robbing themselves of the only leader who had hitherto shown himself capable of coping for a moment with the son of Mœris. The chiefs, however, were sanguine and determined on attacking Sesostris with their whole strength before the arrival of reinforcements from Egypt, and exhorted their followers to exert themselves to the utmost for this grand effort. The Egyptian prince was apprized of their intention, and drew from his principal post, on the confines of desert Arabia, such of his troops as refreshment and tranquillity had again rendered effective.

In the meantime, Tephra beheld with the deepest regret, the determination of the chief-

tains, and ventured, notwithstanding the suspicion with which he was regarded, to dissuade them from what he considered a step fatal to his country. He represented to them the advantages he had already gained by harassing the enemy, and checking their movements, and endeavoured to demonstrate how much more probable their ultimate success would be, if they still continued the same plan of operation ; especially since their present superiority of numbers would enable them to station detachments in the most eligible posts, whence they might annoy the Egyptians, by cutting off stragglers and preventing supplies of provisions ; or even, if possible, intercepting reinforcements, instead of risking the loss of almost all their remaining resources by engaging in a decisive battle with a foe to whom victory was now become habitual, and whose daring courage was fortified by a remembrance of the danger it had already surmounted, and directed by a leader, whose valour was indeed terrible, since it was supported by the fertility of genius. He conjured them to reflect on the battle

already passed, which had well nigh given up Arabia to her invaders, and drenched her plains with the blood of the slain, and the tears of their kindred, and intreated them not to augment the exultation of Egypt, nor inflict another and a deeper wound in the breast of their country.

“How,” he proceeded, “have I deserved your jealousy, or by what step have I merited the suspicion of favouring the Egyptian prince? Was it the ambuscade which cost him the lives of many of his followers, and obliged him to retreat before us? or was it the advice I gave that we should endeavour to procure peace and preserve our freedom by abandoning a portion of territory? if so, I am ready entirely to give up my proposal. Let us continue the war, but in such a manner as may most conduce to a happy termination of it: think not I crave the chief command: every arm I see around me can doubtless sustain the sword with no less valour, and many of our chiefs may be capable of leading our armies with conduct more skilful than that of Tephra;—but



in devotion to the cause of Arabia he yields to none. That devotion shall be displayed in to-morrow's fight, if to fight is resolved on; and may the gods grant that the bloody meal of those birds and beasts who banquet in darkness and horror on the destruction of man may be composed rather of the children of Mizraim than Arabia."

The speech of Tephra was dictated by reason and moderation; yet if it conciliated the affection, or at least disarmed the enmity, it failed to convince the other chieftains who still determined to hazard another battle on the ensuing day.

The sun at length arose, and the two nations met in a desperate conflict since the one strove for entire conquest and a confirmation of that superiority which with so much toil they had obtained, and the other fought for their freedom,—nay almost their national existence. All the Arabian chiefs displayed great valour, yet none equalled the acts of Tephra. But the genius or destiny of Sesostri at length prevailed, and only a few chieftains, including

Tephran, together with some of their followers escaped under favour of the night from the fatal field, to bear the dreadful tale of defeat to the utmost verge of their territory.

The day after this victory, fresh troops arrived from Egypt and the whole country was open to their advance, of which their prince resolved to take instant advantage. He accordingly began, in a rapid march, to penetrate towards the southern coast in hopes of overtaking Tephran, and crushing in him and his companions, the seeds of opposition. But the flight of terror is more swift than the career of triumph, and a start of several hours, joined to a perfect knowledge of the country, enabled the retreating Arabs to baffle pursuit.

Success is not necessarily advantageous, nor failure invariably calamitous since the lessons of prudence taught by the one, are often more beneficial than that confidence which the other is apt to produce. The Arabians, when in possession of an army capable of defending their liberty, had slighted the counsels, and even called in question the

principles of Tephrañ, but the wisdom of those counsels was shown by their defeat, and the chiefs again had recourse to him as alone able to restore his country.

He who offers himself to direct the movements of his nation when in comparative prosperity may be a patriot, yet the honour of command presents perhaps as many allurements to ambition as to virtue ; but the tongue of envy itself must be motionless, or awake only in rancorous soliloquy concerning him who, when that nation seems struggling in the last convulsions, comes forward to its support, and requites the injuries he has received at its hands by his prompt zeal in its service.

Tephrañ had lamented, in secret, the obstinacy of the chiefs ; and beheld, with anguish, his own predictions verified : but, as he had striven with his sword, to falsify his calculations, he refused not to aid the Arabians, now that their truth had been fearfully realized. He, accordingly, accepted the command ; though with little but despair, and first dis-

played his sagacity by the address with which he soothed the regret of the chieftains ; for their late calamity, had converted their mutual recriminations into the most unanimous ardour for their common interests. As they prosecuted their rapid flight, they collected, with indefatigable assiduity, several parties of Arabs who were coming to reinforce their principal army, and which, not having been involved in the slaughter of its overthrow, became thus the support of their country in that hour of distress.

In the meantime, Sesostris, having in vain pursued the flying enemy for two days, and, being somewhat entangled in the desert occupying the centre of the most fertile district of Arabia, thought it expedient for the present to decamp, and not rashly push forward to a part of the country not yet subdued : especially as he was ignorant of the exact number of Arabians still in arms. This done, a council was convened, in which it was resolved, in the first place to examine the country, east and west, in order to ascertain whether any troops

of Arabs were there in motion, and, if so, disperse them; after which, the ground being thus so far made their own, it was next determined that the whole army should march southwards, as rapidly as possible, continually sending out light detachments, to explore the territory through which they were to advance. Such were the plans of operation which appeared most eligible to the Egyptian prince,—and they were immediately put into execution.

Arabia was carefully examined in an eastern and western direction; but such had been the dismay of its inhabitants, and their eagerness to join Tephra and the other chieftains, that not a being was encountered in a line of several rapid days journey towards either sea; and the Egyptian army now began to move in a southern direction.

While Sesostri was thus employed, Tephra without losing a moment, prosecuted his retreat to the south-east coast; and, when there, found his forces much augmented, though by no means an equal match for the Egyptians in

open warfare. But it was on the nature of the ground he placed his principal reliance, and, accordingly, chose, for his chief post, a small hill in the vicinity of the ocean, in which were seven excavations, of large size, entering the rock in different directions, called the seven grottoes. The spot had been celebrated by the reconciliation of two potent chiefs, who had there put an end, in a former age, to an ancient feud;—the sacred stones,\* used in the ceremony, were still standing; and tradition whispered that the elements had never erased from their surface the blood with which they had then been sprinkled. The whole elevation was denominated the hill of concord; and it appeared to Tephra particularly adapted for a strong position; it was, therefore, still farther

\* Herodotus thus describes the ceremony of taking an oath or agreement used in Arabia. The parties were placed in the centre of a rude circle composed of seven stones, when he who administered the oath, having made a slight incision in each of their thumbs, sprinkled the stones with the blood, with a thread taken from their clothes.

fortified, and all the stores, of every description they could collect, were deposited in one of the caverns. Having so far prepared for defence, it was next agreed by the chiefs that one division of their forces should advance to meet the Egyptians, and harass them on their march, while the rest continued to strengthen their main camp, and, if possible, increase their magazines; and they immediately left the hill of concord, having Tephra for their principal commander.

On the third evening, as they were about to encamp, the chiefs were informed that a small party of Egyptians had just been seen, with Sesostris at their head. This was one of those reconnoitring troops sent out, as above described, from the main army, and of which the son of Mœris, with all the ardour of a youthful hero, had himself taken the command, and which thus unexpectedly encountered a force greatly superior to its own. He was scarcely apprised of the enemy's vicinity, when he was surrounded by the Arabians, whose numbers so far outmatched the Egyptians as to threaten

the most fatal result. But courage was natural to his followers, and such were their efforts to break through their assailants, that their escape would perhaps have been effected, if the Arabs had not been animated by the presence, and directed by the skill of Tephrau. Throughout the whole engagement, that experienced leader kept his eye on the Egyptian prince; and, wherever he observed him making an attack, flew to oppose him with a select band.

The troops of Sesostris were now rapidly falling around him, and he was just meditating one furious push for an escape, when his horse was suddenly wounded by an arrow, and, turning instantly round, dashed onwards with ungovernable fury, and, together with his rider, broke through the Arabian line.

All this took place so instantaneously, that there were many, both among the Arabs and Egyptians, who were ignorant of the loss of a leader, and the escape of an important captive; some of those, however, who saw him break through, pursued him for a moment; but the wound of his horse spurred him to the most



prodigious speed, and they soon gave up the chase, imagining the Egyptian prince intended to take a circuit and rejoin his own army. Sesostris was thus borne out of immediate danger; yet, when he remembered he was riding towards the coast, he could not but feel some uneasiness, since each moment placed him farther from his own party, and nearer the enemy. He tried to check the career of his steed, but in vain; darkness closed around him, and the swiftness of his course seemed even accelerated.

The stars were now shining with their wonted brilliancy; yet, as they only served to reveal the direction he was taking, they gave him little consolation. From sunset until dawn, he swept over Arabia towards the south-east; and, exhausted by its own efforts, his horse at length stopped, when he instantly dismounted and examined the wound. He perceived it to be very slight; and, therefore, resolved, when the animal should be sufficiently recruited, to proceed eastward; then bend to the north; and thus, if possible,

arrive at his camp. As, however, some hours would probably elapse before this could be attempted, he began to examine the place in which he was accidentally thrown, and seeing a small grove, at a short distance, that seemed to offer shade and concealment, he proceeded thither, followed by his steed, which had already been attracted by the verdure it contained. His first step, on entering the grove, was to cut on the bark of one or two of the most conspicuous trees these words :—"Sesostris lives," in order that if any of his followers, seeking their prince, should pass that way, their hope might thus be revived, while the import of the writing would be hidden to the Arabians, as the characters were Egyptian.

Having taken this precaution, he next drew forth a very small portion of the scanty stock of provision with which he was furnished ; and, after a slight repast, was admiring the various beauties of the spot, when he observed a large bird on a neighbouring tree, and, reflecting that it might be long ere he had another opportuni-

ty of recruiting his stores, without losing an instant, levelled an arrow at it. The bird fluttered to a little distance, and then fell in a space partially laid open, whither he instantly proceeded to secure his prize; when, as he stepped forward to reach it, the ground gave way beneath his feet, and he was precipitated into a pit of considerable depth. The mould at the bottom was soft and yielding; but he trembled when he beheld a row of strong and sharp stakes running diagonally through the gulf—any one of which, had he fallen upon it, would probably have put a period to his triumphs, and freed the world from its destined conqueror. He was, evidently, in a pitfall dug for entrapping wild beasts; and thus, to his other ill fortune, was added the no very consoling assurance that no inhabitants were in its vicinity. But it was the remembrance of his unhappy followers, whom he had so involuntarily deserted when begirt by foes, that most of all tortured his bosom, and made him wish that he had fallen by an Arabian arrow, rather than survived for so inglorious an adventure.

The situation of those followers well merited his deepest solicitude. Astonished and dismayed at the loss of their leader, as soon as the absence of Sesostris was generally known, some imagined him to have been slain; but, when they were assured he had been seen riding through the enemy, the idea he still lived took exclusive possession of each warrior; and, supposing he was on his return to the army, they excited their horses to the utmost, and rushed towards the weakest part of the circle. A flight of arrows, deadly and unerring, preceded their course, and the most intrepid courage might have shrunk from their charge; but the good fortune they had hitherto experienced, and the presence of the incomparable Tephra, animated the Arabians, and very few Egyptians escaped, on that disastrous night, from death or captivity, to the main body of their countrymen. Among the prisoners were the principle attendants of the prince, Anisis, Menros, and Pakaris; and on the division of the captives, which took place on the spot, all three were committed to the

guard of the same Arab, and lodged, for the night, in one tent; their hands and feet were tied, and they were thrown, without ceremony, on some straw; when they were informed by the Arab that if, during the night, they made the least disturbance, the consequences would be fatal. He could not, indeed, speak their language, but he pointed to their mouths, and, unsheathing a sword, drew it in the air across his own neck—a sign fearfully intelligible: he then left them, and, having secured the tent on the outside, went himself into an adjoining one.

“This then,” said the physician, (who was the first to break silence) “is the happy effect of our prince’s insatiable desire for conquest and adventure; how astonishing it appears to me that one, who has so much to make him happy at home, cannot stay quietly there; but must go wandering over the world, cutting and shooting, riding and driving after people whose only possessions consist of deserts and arrows; the end of all which is that we are now in danger of being starved to-

night, and having our throats cut in the morning."

"Do not let us despair too hastily," replied Anisis, "they will, doubtless, examine us to-morrow; and, when they know who we are, our treatment will improve."

"Osiris grant it," groaned Menros, when Pakaris, (who, even in that piteous condition, could not pass an opportunity of indulging his favourite species of jest) interrupted him by asking, "And what Arabian do you suppose will be in want either of a physician or a secretary? what medicine is better than exercise? and, as to acts, I fear we shall find they make more use of the sword than the pen."

"I entreat you," said Menros, "as you value a moment's tranquillity, do not frighten us to death this last night with your terrible predictions; since a little sleep, if it can be obtained, would surely be a means of preparing us for to-morrow."

Soon after day-break they were visited by the Arabian, to whom they had been committed the night before, who brought them some refreshment, and a summons from Tephra,

and the other chiefs, to whom they were soon after introduced. Anisis immediately explained that he could act as an interpreter, and he was, in the first place, commanded to ask Menros whether he had any qualifications useful to his new masters ; to this question he replied :— He was a physician ; and, moreover, that he knew the secret of for ever preserving the dead from corruption. The same question was next put to Pakaris, who, in reply, snatched up a javelin that happened to be lying near him on the ground, and hurled it at a tent pole with such force and precision, that the weapon trembled in the wood which it had deeply penetrated, exclaiming at the same time “ I am a warrior ; ” and, after speaking a few words to Anisis, tendered his services to Tephra in the strongest terms ; pretending to explain, at the same time, various plans agitated by Sesos-tris ; and, above all, pressed the instant retreat of the Arabians, as the only mode of avoiding being hemmed in by the Egyptian army, and a large reinforcement which he asserted was marching from the north ; with all which cir-

cumstances he affirmed that he alone was acquainted.

Anisis interpreted these fictions with the most unblushing calmness, whilst the poor physician was in such a state of fear as to make him utterly reckless: he already fancied one of the many swords, he saw around him, unsheathed for his execution; and Pakaris afterwards declared, Menros more than once shook his head, as if to ascertain whether it was still on his shoulders. The Arabians were astonished at what they heard; their informant was a captive, and an enemy, but, as his information suited well the skilful conduct of the Egyptian prince, it was determined not wholly to slight it; and some troops were sent out to survey the country. In the evening Pakaris, with Anisis for his interpreter, again presented himself to Tephra, and offered to go to the Egyptian army, and find out what were their future plans; pledging himself, in the most solemn terms to return that very night. The chieftain weighed the loss of an unimportant captive against the advantage



which might accrue from his fidelity, and accepting his proposal, the Egyptian set off, at full speed; and, arriving at his camp, he was struck with the utmost consternation by an enquiry whether he had any tidings of their prince, and by the information subsequently elicited that he had never been seen since he broke through the enemy the night before. He then briefly detailed his own adventures and those of his fellow prisoners, showing the necessity he was under to return, together with the advantages his countrymen might derive from the confidence he should thus obtain in the enemy's camp; and, finally recommending them, above all things, to be cautious and unanimous till they should hear something of Sesostris, hastened back towards the Arabians, having first slightly wounded himself, in order to increase the deception he was carrying on. It was not long before he was again in the presence of Tephra, to whom he communicated the intelligence that the Egyptian prince had never been heard of since the last battle; advising, at the same time, that every effort

should be made to find him, dead or alive, and concluded by professing his zeal for the Arabians, appealing to his having returned when it was in his power to escape, and showing his wound,\* which he declared he had received from an Egyptian, who suspected he was about to desert them, and discharged an arrow at him just after he had mounted.

The chieftain heard, with unspeakable delight, the news he had related, and received Pakaris into his confidence, resolving to commence immediately the search for Sesostris.

In the meantime, that illustrious prince had, as we have seen, exchanged one captivity for another, and escaped from the Arabians at night, to be entangled, next day, in a pitfall: there he remained till towards sunset, revolving various plans of action, but of all which his escape was necessarily the foundation, when he heard footsteps in the grove, and drawing

\* A similar stratagem is mentioned by Herodotus as having been employed by an officer in the army of Darius Hystaspes, in order to take Babylon, which had revolted from that prince.

his sword, (which was the only weapon on his person at the moment he was engulfed) prepared for what he imagined his last contest. As the sound approached, he perceived it to proceed from more than one person, and the next moment somewhat abated his apprehensions, for he discovered, by the voices, they were women.

“How far is this place from the hill of Concord, Phenna?” asked one.

“About two days’ journey and a half,” she replied.

Sesostris started; for the first voice forcibly struck his memory, while Phenna continued:

“They say Tephra again leads our armies, and still hopes to check the haughty Sesostris. Oh, that I could but meet with him in one of the pits we dig for wild beasts; I would soon rid the world of him by dropping a large stone upon his head.”

“I tell thee, Phenna,” rejoined her companion, “it would be impossible to lift thy hand against him, if he did but speak, or his person were but visible. I have never beheld our great

divinity who lives, the Arabian elders say, in the land of fragrance, where the hot winds never blow, and the brooks are never dry, whose bed is composed of flowers, and whose tent is supported by the aromatic cinnamon;\* yet I cannot imagine this divinity to possess more grace or majesty than shines in the person of the Egyptian prince. Do not afflict me, I entreat thee, by speaking anything to his prejudice; it is enough that I hear the voices of our chiefs raised against him, perhaps justly. I know he has invaded our land; yet, if we have formerly injured Egypt, he does but retaliate the wrongs he has received. Gratitude may be stronger than patriotism; and the mysterious claim of sympathy may sometimes unite hearts naturally hostile. Be this as it may, I confess to thee, Phenna, I love the son of Mœris; to thy affection I con-

\* Herodotus, speaking of this spice, says the Arabians could not tell where it grew, except that it came from the land where Bacchus, their great Divinity, was brought up.

hide the secret; do not make me regret my frankness."

"Never," she replied, "will I abuse your confidence; yet, if you would avoid rivals, I would advise you, for the future, not to speak in such glowing terms of your lover. But what horse is that," she continued, "that glitters in such splendid trappings? it cannot belong to one of our chiefs."

Both now approached the animal, and the companion of Phenna, who was no other than Tephra's daughter, was still admiring his fine proportions, when the former Arabian, having walked a few paces in another direction, exclaimed:—

"May the gods preserve us, and avert all harm!" when Mora, turning towards the spot, saw on the ground a bow and quiver of arrows; and, at the same moment, recognized the weapons of Sesostri's, by the characters, whose import she learned during her stay in the Egyptian camp. She was now in the greatest perplexity; yet, after a moment's reflection, informed her companion of the dis-

covery she had made, adding she was sure he was in the vicinity, adverting, at the same time, to the necessity of leaving the place.

“Yet who can tell,” she proceeded, “that some fatal accident may not have befallen him. Here lie his weapons, there stands his steed; may he not, by some casualty, have been separated from his followers, and encountered by superior numbers? then must this land have drunk the blood of Sesostris; then shall the breast of our chiefs rejoice, and the features of Mora must counterfeit a smile: but I will find thy tomb, wherever it is raised; and hereafter my memory, hovering round thy monument, shall there keep a sleepless watch.”

The son of Mœris had felt the most painful though rapturous emotions since he perceived he was thus accidentally thrown into the neighbourhood of Mora. He had heard her confession that she loved him, and her expressions of tenderness could not but enthrall his heart already more than half surrendered to her, uttered thus ingenuously by the beautiful

Arabian ; but when he heard her concluding words he could no longer remain silent, and exclaimed : “ Mora, thy Sesostris is near thee ; but fear nothing.”

The daughter of Tephra felt as if transfixed by an arrow on hearing these words,—so different is the reality of astonishing circumstances from the contemplation of the same occurrences through the veil of probability. She had already come to the conclusion that the Egyptian prince was in their immediate neighbourhood, nor had the idea caused her great alarm, yet now that that inference was verified, and she heard herself addressed by him, terror and surprise for an instant took entire possession of her mind. Her companion, however, was somewhat less affected, and moving towards the voice, discovered the son of Mæris in the pit-fall,—of which she informed the astonished Mora.

Both were instantly at the edge of the gulf, and the prince, throwing off all disguise, briefly recounted to them the adventures which had brought him thither. To extricate him was

the next difficulty, and for this purpose Phenna sought the group of tents, which, at some distance from the grove, were inhabited by the brother of Tephra, to whose care Mora had formerly been intrusted. Without being observed, she took from thence an instrument for digging, with which she returned with the same secrecy. When Mora was first left alone with Sesostris, she attempted to speak, but the remembrance of what had escaped her, while unconscious of any human witness except her female companion, changed her words into a suppressed sigh, and suffused her cheek with the blush of innocence. The Egyptian prince anticipated her confusion, and strove to dispel its pain.

“Do not regret, beautiful Mora,” he said, “much less, recal the accents I heard you utter; since I look back with joy on the battle of yesternight, and on those subsequent events which have enabled me to hear from her own lips. My image lives in the heart of Tephra’s daughter, whose memory has long been the banquet of my thoughts.”



Mora could not recal what she had said, and her own candour whispered she would not if she possessed the power, have again confined her sentiments with regard to Sesostris within her breast. But Phenna now returned, bringing the instrument that was to liberate the captive, about whose future proceedings a consultation was instantly held ; the issue of which was, that both the Arabians entreated him not to attempt immediately rejoining his followers, which must expose him to the almost certain danger of encountering the enemy. He yielded, though with reluctance, to the force of their arguments ; and Mora might secretly rejoice in the necessity which kept the object of her affections, at least for the present in her vicinity. This determined, it was next arranged that Sesostris should pass the night in a hollow tree of considerable size,—since concealment was absolutely necessary,—and that Mora should bring him food in the morning. Its situation was then explained to him, and his bow and quiver removed to it, together with the trappings and harness of his horse

which was left to graze in freedom, being thus more difficult to be recognized ; and as it was now very late, they left the prince, lest their longer stay should cause them to be searched for :—Mora to pass a sleepless night, agitated by fears for his safety, and Phenna, to repent the fierce determination she had formerly expressed against him.

Sesostris found it not easy to extricate himself ; but perseverance at length prevailing, he sought the tree, and having refreshed himself with the remainder of the provisions with which he was fortunately supplied, when he left the battle, clambered into his asylum, which at least promised concealment. He looked around on his rustic chamber, and reflected on the casualties of fortune. No fragrant lamp here illuminated walls covered with tapestry ; no attendants were ready to obey his summons. The moon alone that here and there entered the fissures of the aged tree, threw around him a thousand grotesque shadows of waving branches, whose ceaseless whisper reminded him how lonely and helpless

was his condition, and that the heir to a mighty monarchy, and the leader of a potent and victorious army depended for every moment of his existence, on two of the very nation he had invaded.

Yet the breeze was fraught with the balm of nature's breath, and through the clefts of his retreat he could behold beneath the soft light a thousand creeping plants that threw their graceful arms around his woodland castle, as if to check or sooth the progress of decay, and console the declining monarch of the grove, (as friendship softens the winter of age) and breathing in the symphony of their sleepless motion, the assurance that when it should at last fall, their blossoms should still cling around its trunk, and spread a curtain of greenness and fragrance over its repose. Such were the reflections which passed through the breast of Sesostriis, whose imagination could find in any scene colours for its versatile pencil. But fatigue is an irresistible narcotic, and one by one, these images lost their distinctness, till they floated almost concealed by the mist of

approaching sleep, to which at length his senses were wholly surrendered.

Thus passed the first night, spent by the son of Mœris in the grove, and we have seen how it had been employed by Pakaris, in ingratiating himself with the Arabian chief. In the morning, horsemen were sent in every direction to search for Sesostris, whilst a considerable reinforcement marched with the utmost expedition from the seven grottos, in order to annoy the Egyptians with more effect, while suffering from the absence of their great leader. No time was lost, except for the refreshment of a meal, or an hour's repose; the troops travelled day and night, and joined the camp of Tephra the second evening after their departure.

All this time the Arabians had been scouring over the country seeking Sesostris, in which Pakaris had shewn peculiar activity, continually giving some fresh instance of fidelity, till he effectually won the entire confidence of the Arabians. Having searched long in vain, they rode southwards, when

the grove in which he had taken sanctuary, caught the attention of some of them, and they accordingly explored it in every part. The Egyptian characters cut upon the tree, did not escape the eye of Pakaris, but while he was delighted almost to distraction at what they disclosed, he shuddered lest the indefatigable Arabs should encounter his beloved monarch. When they had examined the grove to no purpose, they left it slowly and dejectedly, and uncertain where next to direct their search, pitched their tents for that day, in order to consult the brother of Tephran, who, as above-mentioned was then in that region,—an opportunity of which Pakaris availed himself to return in the evening to the grove, under an impression it might after all conceal his prince.

Pensive and perplexed he had already traversed several windings, when he saw through the trees the majestic form of Sesostris standing by a female, whom he recognized as the daughter of Tephran. They seemed in deep and impassioned conference, and their

eyes appeared mutually to echo the sentiments of their lips. Pakaris could no longer restrain himself, and the next instant beheld him before his prince, whose hand he seized and kissed with rapturous devotion, while, in a torrent of eloquence, he shortly but forcibly explained the dismay of his followers on his disappearance, and his own peculiar adventures. The son of Mœris felt the most ecstatic joy at thus unexpectedly beholding his faithful attendant, but the moments were precious, and they proceeded to arrange the mode of his escape.

It was accordingly resolved that Pakaris should draw away the Arabians still farther to the south-east, under pretence of having found some trace of Sesostris, and that the prince should ride northwards, and by means of a circuit rejoin the Egyptians. This determined, Pakaris returned to the Arabians, and informed the chieftain he had discovered some Egyptian characters, probably carved by the son of Mœris himself, in order to guide his companions to his retreat, declaring he was on

the south-east coast. Delighted with this intelligence, they all mounted and rode in that direction, while Pakaris obtained permission to seek Tephran, and rejoice him with the tidings.

He now returned to Sesostris, who had employed the intervening time in soothing the distress of Mora. They had become still dearer to each other, since their fortunes had changed ; he had lately in some sort been the captive of the beautiful Arabian ; and while the hero had been rendered more attractive when seen in adversity, the tenderness and fidelity of Mora, found more opportunity to develope themselves, and twine around the affections of the son of Mæris, who could not but surrender his heart to the winning gentleness and assiduity of his lovely benefactress. Ere he departed, he frankly confessed his passion, and had, beneath the canopy of heaven, bound himself to the Arab princess by an oath of constancy.

The faithful Pakaris now presented himself, and not a moment was to be lost ;—the

Egyptian prince left the grove at full speed on a horse provided by his attendant. And now the great catastrophe of the Arabian struggle for independence approached, for Tephra (his reinforcement being arrived) after mature deliberation resolved on attempting the Egyptian camp at midnight. In order to make the surprise greater, a retreat was feigned ; and an Arabian, willing to risk all for his country, pretended to desert to the enemy, and informed them that Tephra, thinking himself unable to keep the field, intended to retire towards his chief post at the seven grottos,—information which was apparently corroborated by the absence of watch-fires in the enemy's camp at night : and the officer, who, in place of Sesostri, now directed the councils of the Egyptians, rejoiced at the prospect of a moment's tranquillity, while the troops were dispirited at the loss of their leader. But that tranquillity was treacherous, for the Arabs, taking a long circuit to the eastward, fell on the Egyptian camp an hour after midnight. The rampart was at the same time assaulted and



taken, and the few guards placed within, were almost instantly overpowered. Such, however, as fled, gave the alarm, and every tent soon poured forth a stream of armed warriors. The confusion was immense, of which the Arabian deserter took advantage and escaped to his own forces, having first increased the dismay of the followers of Sesostris by setting fire to the camp.

The Arabians had now greatly the superiority; for the flaming tents enabled them to see the Egyptians thronging together, some endeavouring to stop the progress of the fire, and others to resist the no less destructive Arabs, amongst all of whom the arrows of Tephra and his troops made terrible havoc. At length the half consumed encampment was abandoned, and the Arabians renewing their war-shout, rushed on to complete their victory. Yet though the son of Mœris was absent, his memory was present to the hearts of his warrior companions, and calling to mind the example of that hero, they still continued the contest, though under every disadvantage,

scarcely more than half their number being mounted.

Their principal officer exerted himself to the utmost, and by his order they protracted the fight, retiring and advancing alternately, till the day at length dawned. Then indeed, their situation became truly perilous; some were without armour, others wanted weapons; and more than all, their arrows on which they greatly depended, were almost spent. This want of resources, which had been hidden in the darkness, was revealed by day-light to the foe, and the annihilation of the Egyptian army seemed inevitable, when two horsemen were seen riding impetuously from the west, and the sky was almost instantly rent by the cry "Sesostris, our great Sesostris," uttered by the sons of Mizraim, while the Arabs felt as if blasted by the desert wind, when they beheld the invincible, the imperishable prince again at the head of his followers, attended by Pakaris, whom they had supposed in their own interest. The condition of the contending parties was in reality nearly the same, but the fears of the

one, and the confidence of the other, caused a re-action in the contest, that was fatal to the Arabians.

Their expectation of victory was changed into panic and defeat, and very few escaped from the field, where their last hopes had expired ; while Tephrau, who resisted to the last, being thrown from his horse, fell into the hand of the enemy. But Sesostris was generous as well as valiant, and, even if his captive had not been the father of Mora, his treatment would have been honorable. As it was, affection spoke the same language as virtue, and he dismissed him with the utmost courtesy, to join the rest of the surviving chiefs, who had retired to the hill of concord, together with a deputy of Egyptians, with proposals of peace, in the name of their king, with the Arabians, and an exchange of prisoners, on condition the latter nation should pay a yearly tribute.

The idea of thus confessing themselves conquered, oppressed their hearts ; but the calamities they had suffered, and the failure of

their resources finally induced them to yield, while they had at least the consolation of having been subdued by a truly noble prince. When this was arranged, Sesostris solicited and obtained the hand of Mora ; and the harmony of the two nations was thus secured by the alliance of their greatest princes. And now, after an absence, in which he had trodden with a youthful foot the path of renown, majestic Thebes hailed with rapture her beloved Sesostris ; and as his galley proudly stemmed the Nilê, the acclamations of innumerable voices repeated his glory, and the scenes of these his first triumphs, were awakened anew,—never to expire by the chisel and pencil of the artist on the walls of regal Karnak.

THE STORY OF SESOSTRIS,  
KING OF EGYPT, CONTINUED.

The desire of conquest does not easily leave the breast of which it has once taken possession, even should ill success attend it, for hope grounded on the fickleness of fortune supplies every deficiency, and the brightness of fame can allure her followers through innumerable failures, and stimulate them to fresh exertions. But if the appetite for dominion be sufficient to actuate those whose efforts to gratify it have been clogged and disappointed by disadvantages and ill success, its solicitations must act with irresistible force on him whose designs have hitherto prospered, and

who is surrounded by every resource that can facilitate new attempts. Such was the condition of Sesostris, the son of Mœris, King of Egypt ; by his Arabian expedition, he had poured lustre round his father's diadem, and bound his own temples and those of his companions in arms, with laurels never to fade.

But his aspiring genius, and the ardour of youth, the encouragements of Mœris, his monarch Sire, and the lofty promises of Heaven contained in the oracle,\* all contributed to make him pine in tranquillity, and excite him to still greater achievements. Having, accordingly, allowed his troops a short repose, he resolved with the approbation of his father, to march westward against the various tribes, stretching from Egypt along the north of Africa, in pursuance of which enterprize, he made the necessary preparations, and left regal Thebes in the spring.

\* It had been declared to Mœris, King of Egypt, by an oracle, that his son Sesostris, yet unborn, should conquer the whole earth.

The Adyrmachidæ\* were the first people in his projected course, to whom a herald was therefore sent with this message :—" Sesostris, son of the monarch of Egypt, commands the Adyrmachidæ to become obedient to Egypt ;—the most mighty gods having commissioned the said Sesostris to conquer the whole earth."

The Lybians were astonished at the arrogance of this mandate ; but the exploits of the Egyptian prince in Arabia had invested his name with a preternatural terror, and they affected to acquiesce in the justice of a claim, which they wanted power or resolution to desist. Thus secure of his first step, the son of Mœris, aware of the importance of celerity, stayed no longer among them than to fix the tribute to be paid to Egypt, and take the necessary measures for ensuring the advantage he had gained, ere he turned his attention to the Giligammæ, the next tribe in his route. To these a message was sent similar to the former,

\* This is the first Lybian tribe mentioned by Herodotus westward of Egypt.—See Herodotus. Melpomene.

and with equal effect ; for the movements of the invader were so swift and unexpected, as to disconcert every plan of opposition.

The facility with which two nations had thus been subdued was highly gratifying to Sesostris and his followers ; for though their achievements against the Arabs had justly confirmed their confidence, yet they considered that a vast unknown space was still to be traversed, peopled by various races of men, who might call forth their utmost valour. They remembered that every moment would place them at a greater distance from their country, and plunge them deeper amid hostile regions, where every inch of ground was to be bought with blood, and where, whilst the decay was inevitable, the recruiting their resources was at best precarious. But to none was the ease with which he had hitherto advanced more grateful, than Menros, his physician, who with Anisis and Pakaris, the crafty Pallic, attended him in this as well as his former expedition.

“ Thanks to Osiris,” exclaimed Menros,



(addressing himself to Anisis, the first night they encamped among the Giligammæ) “who, since our prince is resolved at any rate, neither to rest tranquil himself, nor permit others to do so, has not destined us to invade a people like the Arabians, but quite another sort of men who respect the oracle of Heaven, and wisely judge it impossible to resist us. Our march is nothing but travelling in comfort, while we pause in each country to receive the utmost deference from its inhabitants, and observe the various peculiarities it offers. My only anxiety is, lest our leader, thirsting for peril and adventure, should leave these good people, and seek a foe, against whom he will have to employ the sword rather than the tongue.”

“Your uneasiness on this head will soon be put an end to, as well as the impatience of our prince,” replied Anisis, “if any credit be due to Pakaris, whose intimations correspond with what I have elicited from some Lybians, with whom I have been conversing, in order to ascertain all the information with

in my reach, concerning our intended line of march."

"And what are these intimations," answered the physician, his colour changing as he spoke.

"The sum of them is," said Anisis, "that the whole country, stretching towards the setting sun, is of an immeasurable extent, and inhabited by innumerable nations, many of whom are warlike; and that the Nasamones, one of the most powerful and populous, lie not very far distant; they also speak of warriors who rush to battle in chariots swift as the wind."

The physician heard and trembled, and his dreams that night were full of the terrible images thus presented to his imagination.

Meanwhile the Asbystæ, who lay next in the path of Sesostris, astonished at the career of that prince, of which they had been apprized by some of the Giligammæ, who had fled at his approach, began to meditate opposition; and accordingly sent deputies to the Auschisæ, their western neighbours, concluding their address with these words:—"A torrent

is rolling from the east, 'more destructive than the locusts, and more rapid than the waves\* of the desert; will you join with us in opposing it, or by abandoning us share our destruction?"

The Auschisæ were moved by these solicitations; but feuds, the constant plague of barbarous nations, had lately arisen between them and the Asbystæ, and they negociated and hesitated till the time for action was lost; for the Egyptian prince having fixed the tribute, and secured the obedience of the Gili-gammæ, advanced with the utmost speed against the next tribe, whose consultation with some deputies from the Auschisæ was suddenly interrupted by the herald and haughty mandate of Egypt. They were struck with the utmost consternation;—yet the command was disregarded, and their youth flew to arms. But the issue of a battle with disciplined and veteran

\* The wind often raises the sands of the African deserts into vast billows which have sometimes overwhelmed whole caravans.

troops, could not be doubtful : their chariots,\* in which they placed their principal dependance, were quickly disordered, and those who escaped westward to the Auschisæ, taught that nation to deplore the jealousy and delay, which had deprived them of an active confederate. Yet the same irresolution still pervaded their councils, till the appearance of the Egyptian herald made their fears at once predominate ; their subjugation was sealed ; and the son of Mœris saw himself conqueror of the four first nations in his course.

The Nasamones who were the next tribe to the west, heard with alarm of the rapid advance of Sesostris, which, however, they resolved in earnest to check, and accordingly convened a council of the whole nation, in which it was determined to choose some leader of approved valour, who might direct the combined force of the state. On proceeding

\* The tribe of Lybians called Asbystæ were much addicted to the use of chariots.—See the account of this nation given by Herodotus in his *Melpomene*.

to elect, three principal candidates appeared, all of tried courage, and by whose ancestors the Nasamones were accustomed to swear\* in their most solemn engagements.

Of these Moskar was at length fixed on, who began immediately to levy troops, and at the same time despatched a messenger to the Egyptians, with these words: "The Nasamones counsel the Eastern tyrant to advance no farther, since the sands of the deserts have no need to be whitened by the bones of strangers."

The poor physician happened to be in the tent of his prince, when this message was delivered; and the colour of his visage corresponded strangely with the predicted hue of the desert sands. Sesostris, however, returned a haughty answer, and the Lybian was dismissed. Yet the spirit their embassy had

\* The Nasamones were accustomed to swear by those of their nation who were considered to have been the most virtuous.—See an account of this and some other interesting particulars of the same tribe in the *Melopomene* of Herodotus.

displayed, and the accounts he had heard of their numbers and power made the Egyptian conqueror contemplate the Nasamones with some solicitude, and he agitated various modes of circumventing them by artifice;—and arrived at the conclusion that a spy should be sent among them who might ascertain the nature of their resources, and be enabled, by insinuating himself into their confidence, to afford his country the most important aid. The son of Moeris, with the ardour and daring natural to his disposition, was ready to undertake in person this dangerous service; a measure which his followers, and especially Anisis strenuously opposed.

“Consider, great Prince,” said he, “what it is you meditate, and how many risks you will incur. What disguise can screen Sesostris from observation? That greatness of stature, that lofty bearing must reveal you through the darkest veil; they will read in every turn of your features, every cadence of your voice, the invader of their territory; then shall a thousand daggers be unsheathed for your

destruction, a thousand javelins shall fly around you, each thirsting for your blood. But why must Egypt thus early bewail the fall of the greatest of her sons ? There are many among us capable of executing this commission, but your equal will never arise ; be persuaded, then, I entreat you, nor hasard the loss of the splendour, Heaven has decreed to your arms."

Sesostris felt the force of these remonstrances, and it was finally determined that Anisis, whose address and knowledge of the language qualified him in an eminent degree for the proposed manœuvre, should be intrusted with its execution ; and he accordingly set off with the utmost expedition for the Nasamonian territory.

On reaching that state, he was struck with the appearance every where presented, of a resolution to resist with vigour ; various parties some partially, some completely armed, were moving in different directions ; one of which soon observed and approached him. He was thus immediately called upon to commence his

intended line of stratagem, and he accordingly addressed the chief of the detachment in a grave yet fluent discourse—his travels in the early part of his life through Lybia, having made him well acquainted with its idiom. The purport of his speech was, that he was come from the Egyptian camp, and was desirous of being introduced to their first commander, for whom he had important information. They immediately acceded to his request, and in a few hours he arrived at the principal post of the Lybians, and was conducted to the tent of Moskar.

It was now evening, and the chieftain was engaged at the banquet; but the tidings that a stranger from the enemy solicited an audience met with instant attention, and Moskar, rising from the table, withdrew to an adjoining tent,—to which Anisis was, at the same time, admitted. The Egyptian deputy was the first to break silence.

“It is unnecessary to enlarge to you, great Prince, on the power of our leader, Sesostris; such has been his valour and celerity,—his



conduct and good fortune, that he has already subjected four of your tribes, without having to mourn over a hundred followers; nor will many days elapse ere you will be summoned to yield, or contend with a most potent foe. Why should I speak of his actions in Arabia, or of the armies which there fell before his prowess? It may be sufficient to say that Egypt, long accustomed to splendour, views him with astonishment, and that his father, Mœris—the greatest of her monarchs—is resolved to assist him with the treasure of the wealthiest of realms. But you may answer:—‘Is he not still mortal? is not his body vulnerable, and his fortune subject to change?’ Doubtless, mighty chief, Sesostris is mortal; that gigantic form shall one day recline beneath the ray of the sepulchral lamp;\* that arm,

\* Egyptian science, ever on the stretch to honour the dead, and beautify their last mansion, discovered a compound, which, when once ignited, burned for an incredible time, and was thus peculiarly fitted to illuminate their vast sepulchral excavations.—See the Romance of Rameses.

which can wield a sword with a force no mail can resist, shall be restrained by the bandages\* of the tomb; and that eye, whose flash in the day of battle is intolerable to his enemies, shall be extinguished in the apathy of oblivion. Yet listen, Lybian, to a tremendous secret; it is the breath of Heaven that impels our leader, and fans his ardour into an irresistible fire. You haply despise, as false, his boast of a favouring oracle; but be not deceived;—that asseveration is not groundless,—a voice has spoken from the unerring shrine of Heliopolis, a city in Egypt, declaring him the conqueror of the world. Yet there is one circumstance about the response of which our Prince is ignorant; or he would not have incensed me by refusing me the command of a certain division of his forces; for the gods have predicted that, if either of his three

\* The bandages with which their mummies were wrapped, constituted a prominent feature in the embalming of the ancient Egyptians.—See a description of the three modes of embalming in the Euterpe of Herodotus.

principal followers desert him, the nation to which he betakes himself shall prevail over the Egyptian arms. This benefit I now proffer to you, and, if you reject it, shall pass to some other of your tribes; and our haughty prince shall feel that he is not invincible. I do not, however, expect you to believe what I say, unsupported by proof: choose me a small band of Nasamones, and, within two days, I engage to bring you into contact with a party of my countrymen; for all the plans of our leader are well known to me, and if in this engagement we are defeated, even though inferior in numbers to the Egyptians, may my body be devoted to death, and my name to infamy. But if, at the first shock, your enemies give way, if the proud Sesostris (for I know he will himself command the detachment) be seized with amazement and panic, then let me obtain your confidence, and influence your counsels. Yet it is possible you will not even trust me so far; if so, I quit your nation; if otherwise, drink this water."

He concluded, and taking, at the same time,

some of that fluid from a vessel, that stood near, in the hollow of his hand,\* offered it to the Lybian.

Moskar had listened, with attention and astonishment, to the communication of the stranger; he inwardly trembled as the terrible attributes of the Egyptian prince were enumerated, and the idea that the storm, which threatened his nation, was not to be averted, since it was urged forward by the breath of destiny, pressed like ice upon his heart. To this horror succeeded a faint hope, inspired by the latter part of the speech; at the same time he considered that all, or a part of this statement might be a fraud, which notion, however, died away in spite of himself, as he marked the apparent sincerity of the speaker. Finally, he weighed the greatness of the prize against the little that would be

\* The faith of the Nasamonians was plighted by the engaging parties drinking some water from each others hand; and, if this could not be had, sand might be used instead, the parties touching it with their tongue.—See Herodotus' Melopomene.

risked ; and, resolving at length to trust him to the extent he required, drank the water, and, dipping his own hand into the same vessel, presented it to Anisis, who received it with eagerness mixed with grace, and immediately followed Moskar to the banquet.

Early the next day, the Egyptian surveyed such of the troops as were then at their chief station, from which he selected five hundred men, equipped either to advance or retreat with speed, who immediately marched under his direction ; while the Nasamonian leader himself accompanied him at his request.

“ For consider,” urged Anisis, “ how far better it will be, great Moskar, that yourself should witness my fidelity, and, at the same time, shew your countrymen you confide in the Eastern stranger. Besides,” he continued, “ should I lead forth your troops to success and glory, I might incur the envy of your chiefs ; but when they behold their countryman a conqueror, jealousy will sleep ; and I shall still be allowed to suggest the best mode of carrying on the war.”

Moskar listened with pleasure to this proposal; yet some of his officers represented to him how dangerous it would be to trust his person so near a powerful enemy in the hands of a foreign adventurer, who had already condemned himself of breaking his faith with his own nation, while the Nasamones had no other pledge for his fidelity to them than mere words. The suggestions, however, of Anisis finally prevailed, and they led the forces in concert.

In the meantime, the son of Mœris, according to the arrangements of his crafty minister, detached two parties from his army, one of which he led in person, and gave the other to Pakaris, who by the zeal, activity, and talent he had displayed in Arabia, had won the peculiar esteem and confidence of his prince. To him, therefore, he communicated the proposed plan of operations; and they marched out with their respective troops, a little beyond the frontier of the Auschisæ, each to the post fixed on by Anisis. And now the second sun, since the resolution

adopted by Moskar, was beginning to decline, when Anisis suddenly exclaimed :—

“ Lybians, prepare yourselves ; the Egyptians approach ;—I know that standard which waves in the distance ;—Sesostris himself leads yonder band.”

By this time the advancing enemy became visible to the Nasamones ; and an involuntary yet irresistible fear began to invade their hearts, on seeing themselves so soon about to be confronted with a prince, of whom they had heard such terrible accounts. The confidence, however, apparent in the countenance of their chief revived, in a great measure, the courage of his followers, and they immediately formed for battle.

At the same time the Egyptians, who had in their turn descried the Nasamones, now came on, ready for combat ; and Sesostris, on beholding Anisis among the Lybians, feigned astonishment and rage in every turn of his features,—every gesture of his body ; which dissimulation was admirably copied by his troops, till Moskar, in the height of his

congratulations, said to those immediately around him :

“ He must be true ; therefore advance without fear.”

The battle word was now given on both sides, when the Egyptians, who had charged with boldness, appeared suddenly broken and panic struck : many of them threw down their arms and fled with precipitation, while the rest seized the son of Mœris (who stood to all appearance amazed and confounded at his change of fortune,) and forcing him from the field, hurried after their companions. The Lybians eagerly pursued them, but their loss was slight, since they soon reached a line of chariots drawn up on purpose in the vicinity, to which were harnessed horses of great strength and swiftness. These, together with the cars had been furnished in great numbers by the Asbystæ, and they soon bore the Egyptians out of reach of the Nasamones.

Few of the enemy had fallen in this battle, but their defeat appeared unequivocal to the Lybians, who, as they collected the arms which



here and there strewed the field, felt their spirits rise, as much as they had formerly been depressed ; while their chieftain was at a loss for language, capable of expressing to Anisis the joy he felt.

Sesostris, the hitherto invincible Sesostris, had retired before him : the tide of destiny had turned, and fear at once gave way to confident expectation of success. By this time the day was within an hour of closing, when some Nasamonians, who had been engaged in a hot pursuit of the enemy, suddenly returned, and while, yet at some distance, shouted to their countrymen that more Egyptians were advancing upon them, and that they must prepare for a desperate conflict, or a rapid retreat, as the body of troops they had descried was more numerous than that which had already been routed.

Moskar was somewhat perplexed at this intelligence, but Anisis hastened to dispel his anxiety, and replied : “ It is Pakaris, I know it well ; all the plans of the haughty Prince of Egypt are open to my view ; rush on, great

Lybian, your foes shall flee before you, though they more than double your numbers, since the mandate of the immortal gods is ever irresistible."

Animated by these exhortations, Moskar again drew up his troops in order of battle, while the certainty of past, was in each breast an earnest of future victory. Nor were they kept long in suspense, for Pakaris soon appeared with a detachment more powerful than the foregoing; and after the same dissimulation had been practised by Anisis and his countrymen, and the same rancour mutually evinced by them as before, the signal for battle was given on both sides, the Lybian watchword being "Fate is victorious."

Nor did the event falsify their hopes, for the Egyptians fled at the first shock, and Moskar observed scoffingly of Pakaris, that he doubted not that officer thought the general should be first in every thing, since he saw him set the example of flight. Yet this apparent defeat cost Sesostris as few lives as the former, for chariots had also been placed ready by Pakaris

with fresh horses, in which he and his forces easily fled to the territory of the Auschisæ, there to rejoin their prince, and congratulate each other that their artifice had thus far succeeded.

The exultation of Moskar was by this time unbounded, and the credit and influence of Anisis firmly established. His voice now directed all the Lybian councils, and it was resolved at his suggestion to return the next day to the Nasamonian territory, in order to complete the levies and other arrangements for future opposition. Yet ere he departed, the emissary of Sesostri deposited in a place previously fixed on by both, a roll of papyrus containing these words:—"My power over the Lybians is now absolute; their movements hang upon my slightest word; let the mighty son of Mœris within three days lead forth his whole army towards the country of the Nasamones, and halt at the salt-spring, midway between their frontier and that of the Auschisæ. There let him wait till the sun of the fourth day shall rise and set, by which

time I will cause the Lybians to encamp within two hours' march of the Egyptians; then let Sesostris move directly forward one hour before midnight, and he will easily overwhelm the camp of Moskar."

To this scroll was appended a seal, impressed with the sacred aspic,\* the hieroglyphic of Anisis shewing that he had successfully encountered the trials of initiation, around which emblem appeared his name, elaborately represented by appropriate figures.† This

\* This animal was held sacred in Egypt, and was worn by those who had been initiated into the mysteries. See the Romance of Rameses.

† Modern research has arrived at the conclusion, that besides the purely symbolical hieroglyphics, there was another sort used in Egypt, composing an alphabet with which the proper names at least seem always to have been written. This alphabet appears to be constituted from representations of animals, &c., each object being put for the letter which was the initial of its name, as if in our language a tree should be made to represent the letter T, a man M, &c.—See a general sketch of the hieroglyphics in the preliminary observations in the second volume of Heeren's Researches.

document was accordingly read by the son of Mœris, who prepared to act in pursuance of its directions.

Meanwhile morning dawned, and the Nasamones retired towards their own country, bearing in their hands the spoils of the enemy, and in their hearts the expectation of future triumphs. But there was one breast in which happiness had no place, since it was tormented by envy against the Egyptian stranger.

Ever since Anisis had engaged himself to Moskar, Almak, the eldest of his sons, had considered him as a rival, and each success which had subsequently crowned his country, had only served to increase his rancour. He resolved, if possible, to ruin him, and for this purpose he endeavoured to rouse the jealousy and fears of his father, at the same time that he strove to insinuate himself into the confidence of the emissary of Sesostris, hoping in an unguarded moment to elicit something to his detriment. But the firm reliance placed by Moskar on his new confederate, and the courtesy yet distance, that marked the communications of Anisis

with Almak, had rendered the alarms addressed to his father, and the flattery employed towards the Egyptian 'equally inefficient, until he suddenly conceived a plan by which he hoped to surpass Anisis in favour, by eclipsing his services, and conferring a most important benefit on his country.

The project aimed at, was no less than the capture of Sesostris himself ;—and bold as it was, the means of executing it instantly suggested themselves. He had in his conversations with Anisis made frequent enquiries about every thing peculiar to Egypt ; their domestic life, buildings, modes of dress, &c., and had scrutinized attentively every particular which distinguished the costume of his father's new ally. One of these was a ring, bearing the seal, already described, and this having attracted his especial investigation, he had learned that by impressing any written document, by means of clay or wax, with that or a similar instrument, it was made known that such writing had received the sanction of the owner of that seal.

All this had passed two days since, and though forgotten by the Egyptian now afforded the Nasamonian his principal hope of success in the intended scheme. He had observed that Anisis, when preparing to practise throwing the javelin with the Lybians (which had been his constant custom during his residence among them,) always took off his ring, which he generally wore on his right hand, and deposited it in a small casket, which he afterwards secured by putting in motion a hidden spring. By nice observation he discovered the mode of shutting the case, and imagining that an action in a contrary direction would open it, he tried the experiment when the Egyptian was practising as usual, and to his infinite satisfaction he unclosed the casket, and possessed himself of the important seal, armed with which all-powerful talisman he sought his father, having first again shut the case. He found Moskar among his officers taking some refreshment, after the exercise of the day ; the same on which the Nasamones again reached their principal encampment from the

two successful encounters with the enemy. Perceiving Anisis was not present, he requested Moskar for permission to select two hundred horsemen, saying, that he wished to explore the tract of country between them and the Auschisæ, and if possible, approach so near the latter as to observe the motions of the foe. His father yielded without hesitation, only recommending him, not to be too adventurous, but to temper ardour with prudence.

Evening was now far advanced, but Almak full of his enterprize, and dreading the interference of his Egyptian rival resolved not to waste a moment, and accordingly swept over the desert with his detachment, with the utmost speed guided by the stars, and his knowledge of the ground he was traversing, till a little before morning he arrived within a very short distance of the Auschisian territory. Here he left his followers, placing them in ambuscade behind a hill in the vicinity, and rode forward alone into the country of the above mentioned tribe.



He enquired of the first person he met, if he could guide him to the Egyptian prince. The individual addressed, who was a Lybian, answered in the affirmative, as he was one of the interpreters in his employment. They accordingly commenced their route, but had not proceeded far, when they met a party of Egyptian horse, whose leader happening to be Pakaris, was, of course known to the interpreter, who immediately introduced the son of the Nasamonian chief to the Egyptian officer, as a person desiring a conference with Sesostris.

Thus called on to commence his design, the Lybian now addressed Pakaris, who gave him to understand he had some acquaintance with his language.

“I am,” he said, “the chosen and confidential attendant of your countryman Anisis, from whom I bear important communications,” at the same time shewing the ring which carried instant conviction to the mind of Pakaris, who replied, “That his prince was

not far distant, and that he would immediately conduct him to his presence."

In half an hour he reached the destined spot, and being introduced to the son of Moeris, he requested they might be alone, and all except Pakaris and Menros having withdrawn, spoke as follows :—

"I am, great Prince, a Lybian, the chosen attendant of Anisis, whose desertion of you has already produced such important effects. But though the contemplation of future crime may be endured without remorse, its retrospect must awaken horror in all but the most abandoned breast, and the consciousness of having betrayed his country, already tortures the heart of him who was once your follower. He now wishes for a reconciliation, which, if you will grant, he entreats you to return with me to meet him midway between this nation and that of the Nasamones, where he awaits you, unknown to all but myself. He bid me likewise tell you, a change of circumstances requires a change of operation, and

commanded me withal to shew you this trinket, (displaying the ring as he spoke) which he always wore on his right hand, and which he said would convince you of his sincerity, and obtain credit for me."

Sesostris listened with some astonishment to his speech, but the sight of his minister's seal operated with him as irresistibly as with Pakaris, while his pretended desire of a reconciliation, he instantly conceived to be the method adopted by his emissary for making some new arrangement, at the same time that he thus veiled the true state of things from his Lybian attendant. These considerations determined him with the approbation of Menros and Pakaris to go with the Nasionian, attended by the latter officer and one other follower. They set off at full speed, while Almak scarcely believed the success of his own artifice.

They soon arrived on the frontier of the Auschisæ, and in two hours more having reached the ambuscade, the signal agreed on was made by the son of Moskar, and Sesostris

was instantly surrounded by the Lybian horsemen. He now perceived he had been betrayed, when it was too late to avert the treachery, but courage was inseparable from his existence, and the most appalling danger his proper element. He therefore drew his sword, and endeavoured to break through the armed circle, at the same time exclaiming, "Fly Pakaris, and tell my Egyptians their prince has been deceived, though I still acquit Anisis. Act therefore with the army as I intended to do, and remember that the voice of destiny cannot speak falsehoods."

The number of his foes might reasonably banish every hope of escape, yet the Lybians shrank before a warrior, whose eyes shot living fire, and whose arm carried death with every stroke, and the prowess of the Egyptian prince might have prevailed, had not Almak mortally wounded his horse with a javelin, who, falling beneath his rider, the son of the Nasamonian chief beheld with delight his great enemy overpowered and taken.

Pakaris had fled, solely however to obey his

prince's mandate, but the other follower was slain. The Lybians regretted that their eagerness to secure the chief prize had enabled one of the enemy to make good his retreat, yet Almak saw with transport his principal object achieved, and mounting his captive on a horse, belonging to one of the fallen Nasamonians, and having firmly secured him to two Lybians who rode on each side, returned with the utmost despatch to his own nation.

In the mean time Anisis was totally unconscious of the coming storm ; he had, indeed, missed and enquired for the son of Moskar, nor was he entirely without apprehension, however undefined, on hearing of his sudden excursion. He trusted, nevertheless, that the vigilance of his prince, and the weakness of the Nasamonian force would prevent the Egyptians from sustaining any material loss, and he prepared for the execution of his project arranged with Sesostris.

It was now the evening of the day after Almak left his father, who, according to the advice of Anisis, had taken the resolution of

marching with his whole power towards the territory of the Auschisæ, the Egyptian having pretended he would put into his hands the army of the eastern conqueror. His troops had therefore been summoned to the principal encampment, and their chief assisted by Anisis, was reviewing them as they assembled, when on a sudden, shouts of triumph were heard in the distance, and the next moment a dense cloud of dust was soon followed by the trampling of horses, and Moskar exclaimed, "It is my son, and he has been successful, I should distinguish that voice though heard amid the acclamations of thousands."

He was not mistaken, but he scarcely believed his senses, when Almak cried out as he approached him :

"The eastern tyrant is terrible no more,—the chains of Lybia are for ever broken ; Sesostris is taken, we have brought him captive from the very centre of his power."

With these words he pointed at the Egyptian prince, secured as above described, and

who, even in that low condition of his fortune, still looked like the favourite of destiny the fated conqueror of earth, while the Nasamonian chief, though rejoicing at the vastness of his success, trembled involuntarily at the presence of his unarmed enemy, and shrank from the tremendous gaze of his captive. But no language can paint the sickness of heart, the coldness of the despair which now crept over the breast of Anisis.

When he heard Almak's first words, his brain seemed to reel, yet he resolved not to believe their import, and even when the tall form of their prince revealed their reality, he placed his hand before his eyes, and wildly muttered, "They cannot have taken him,—it must be a phantom ;" and then, in order to avoid meeting his glance and that of Almak, glided unperceived from the assembly, his veins throbbing with an instantaneous fever, and reason tottering on her throne.

The son of Moskar was now greeted by his father and his followers, with all the congratulations which the greatness of his services

deserved, and a thousand questions as to how they had been achieved. To these he only gave a general answer, concealing as yet the story of the ring, but, in order not to lose the opportunity now afforded him of rivalling Anisis, he began to insist on taking an active share in the Lybian councils, since his late exploit had changed the face of affairs, and demanded other measures, rendering the Egyptian deserter, as he now called him, far less, if at all necessary to the Nasamones, and observing that these opinions were countenanced by such of the chiefs as were present, and not at once discouraged by his father, he ventured another step, and began to breathe a suspicion of the sincerity of Anisis. He suggested that he ought to have been present to share their triumph, if he were indeed interested in their final success.

“ I watched him,” he continued, “ when he imagined no eye was upon him, and observed his agitation as he surveyed for a moment our important captive. If he were sincere, would he not hasten to partake our joy ?”



He paused in expectation of an answer that might accord with his own sentiments, but the memory of two victories gained under the direction of the Egyptian, was still fresh on the minds of the Lybians. Moskar waved his hand in indignation, and a murmur of dissent raised by the subordinate chiefs warned Almak that he had not yet ruined the reputation of Anisis.

By this time that unhappy follower of Sesostris had in some degree recovered his self-possession, and considering that the imminent peril in which his prince was placed, demanded all his subtlety and every exertion, he hastened to the tent of Moskar, and there feigned such joy at the capture of the son of Mæris, as confirmed the Nasamonian chief in the opinion of his fidelity, and seemed to display the weakness of Almak's suggestions. He now requested that himself might be allowed to guard the important prize during the night, to which Moskar assented; but afterwards yielded to the solicitations of Almak, and allowed him to take part in this office. To

this arrangement Anisis was obliged to yield with the best grace he could, though he inwardly detested so unwelcome an intruder, and as it was already late, repaired to the tent allotted to Sesostris, accompanied by his ill-suited companion.

The meeting of the prince and his emissary was highly painful to both, since the abhorred presence of Almak precluded any explanation ; but Anisis steadily kept up the character he had assumed, and exclaimed, as he entered the tent in the Lybian language, “ Such, haughty Prince, is the fruit of your enmity to me, you might have been a conqueror, who are now a captive, and I only regret it was not my hand that seized you.”

These words were answered by Sesostris with a look of ineffable scorn, so admirably feigned, as to make the Egyptian tremble, lest it should be real instead of affected, while the former said in a voice whose tones of preternatural expressiveness and terror appalled the Lybian’s heart :—“ Perfidious, is it thus thou hast twice betrayed thy prince ? Is the past

swept from thy memory, or the future from thy contemplation? Is gratitude banished from the earth, or have the gods ceased to inhabit the starry skies? If not, tremble at the doom that awaits thee?

“For thee, treacherous Lybian,” he continued, turning to Almak, “I regard thee but as his tool. That subtle train of deception no more originated in thyself, than did the seal to which it chiefly owed its success. He gave thee the one, and taught thee the other, thus using as the instrument of his purposes that ring whose figure is the sacred symbol of eternity, and which should have never been employed but in the service of truth.”

Sesostris, while making these observations, with regard to the seal, bent a look of intense scrutiny on the countenance of Almak, and that of Anisis; and his penetration accustomed to read the feelings in the looks of men, immediately inferred from the visible perturbation of the former, and the unfeigned unhappiness and astonishment evinced by the

latter, that Anisis was, after all innocent, and had himself been deceived by some means, hitherto unknown.

He therefore concluded in a more softened manner : “ The agency however of time is as powerful as it is silent, and celestial justice will at length determine who has been faithful and who a traitor to Sesostris.”

Anisis was almost confounded at what he had just heard ; he felt involuntarily for his ring, and then abruptly leaving Almak and his prince, sought his own tent, and examined the casket in which he kept the seal, wavering between a suspicion, and an ideal impossibility\* that he had lost it. But no words can describe his astonishment, on discovering that the case was empty, especially as from its being closed in the manner he had left it, and exhibiting no marks of violence. It was evident that the secret spring had by some means become known. Returning therefore to the tent occupied by Sesostris, he called Almak without entering, and being immediately joined by the

latter, charged him plainly with a breach of honour in having treacherously possessed himself of his ring.

“Is it thus,” he said, “ungrateful Lybian, that you repay my services to your father and your country? Is it thus you recompense the two triumphs with which I have crowned your arms? Nor can the plea of expediency avail thee? What, though thy fraud hath placed the son of Mœris in our hands, so long as a powerful army remains unsubdued. Will vengeance make their swords less keen, or their arrows less fleet?”

“Mark me, Lybian,” he continued, in a deeply expressive tone, “without me you cannot conquer. I knew all the intentions of my prince, and had proposed to Moskar to deliver his army into the power of the Nasamones within four days after our last expedition; this purpose thou hast disconcerted. Restore me, then, my seal, or I will instantly discover thy practices to the chiefs; and if thou cross me farther, I swear by the greatest of the Nasamonian ancestors, that the

son of Mœris shall escape, though his form were wrapt in a thousand chains,—while a monument of whitened bones shall alone point out to future ages the land once tenanted by thy tribe.”

Almak was not wanting in courage, yet he dreaded the exposure of what he felt to be perfidy, even though that perfidy had been so eminently successful. He therefore gave back the ring on the spot, making a defence at the same time for his conduct, insisting that he had not opened the casket, but that one of his attendants had found the ring by accident. Anisis was convinced of the falsehood of these statements, as he perfectly remembered placing the seal in the usual receptacle ; yet having now so far gained his point, as to have put the crafty Lybian in his power, he pretended to be satisfied once more, repeating his threats in case of any farther opposition to his will.

They both now began to re-enter the tent, when the Egyptian suddenly stopped, and exclaimed,—“ Some one calls Almak,—I think it was the voice of one of the chiefs, intending

doubtless, to give you some directions regarding our prisoner ; hasten therefore to learn them while I return to my post."

A moment of secret conference with his prince was thus allowed Anisis, of which he eagerly availed himself, as catching his hand, and pressing it to his lips, he said with a low and rapid utterance,—“ I am not false to the son of Mœris, but have been myself deceived, yet all is again in my power,—trust wholly to me.”

Scarcely had he completed this hurried explanation, and received an approving glance from Sesostriis, when Almak again appeared, saying that he had met with no one, and that he thought Anisis had been mistaken. Some refreshment was now brought in, and the Egyptian, as he poured out for Sesostriis a goblet of palm wine, seemed to take an opportunity, while the latter chanced to avert his head, of introducing into the liquor a portion of a drug which he always carried with him, whose narcotic effect was so powerful as to

resemble death ; and whispering to the Lybian who watched him intently “ He drinks his own destruction,” presented it to his prince, who forthwith drained the contents.

Anisis now rose from the table, and beckoning the son of Moskar out of the tent, bid him go and apprise his father that Sesostris had taken poison, and might already be considered dead ; then himself returning to the Prince, he informed him how he had acted, saying he had administered such a dose as was sufficient to suspend all appearance of life, till late the following night, by which time he would contrive to place him at liberty. They were now rejoined by Almak, and in a short time the soporific beginning to operate,—the son of Moëris stretched himself on a couch made of soft mats, exquisitely worked, with which the Nasamonian tents were furnished in more or less profusion. In the space of another hour he no longer seemed to exist, and Moskar, with some of the inferior chiefs, having at the request of Anisis, seen their enemy appa-



rently dead, all betook themselves for the present to repose.

The next day the Egyptian obtained from Moskar permission to inter Sesostris himself, saying that certain funeral rites were observed in Egypt, in which it was profane for strangers to take any share, alleging that as his hand had slain him, so none but he should perform the last obsequies for one whom he had once loved.

“The voice of memory,” he continued, “calls to me from the past, and bids me spread in the midst of solitude the bed of death for the greatest of mortals.”

To this demand Almak seemed inclined to make some opposition, but Anisis whispered, “Remember the seal,” and his tongue was silent while his heart was a prey to rage.

In the mean time day wore away, and at sunset the Egyptian privately selecting the fleetest horse he could obtain, on which he rode himself, and attended by some Lybians who conveyed the body of Sesostris in a litter, proceeded to the frontier of the Nasamonian

territory, and having gone a little way into the desert lying between that tribe and the Auschisæ, he sent away the Lybians, detaining one of their horses, and the time being near when the prince was to awake, waited with intense anxiety by his side.

It was now within an hour of midnight, when the lethargy began to relax, and nature re-asserting her command, Sesostris again stood by his faithful follower.

“Not a moment is to be lost, great leader,” said Anisis, “mount this steed, fly to our countrymen, and encamp at the salt-spring; thither will I lead the Lybians by to-morrow night, and our plan shall yet take its course.” He said; the son of Mœris mounted, and the next day beheld him again at the head of his victorious army, who received with acclamations their imperishable commander.

In the mean time his crafty emissary had returned the night before to the Nasamones on the horse the attendants had left, saying, that he had slain his own as the Egyptian rites demanded on the tomb of the prince, and

withal, shewed Moskar a lock of hair, which he said he must ever preserve in memory of his exploits. He now pretended that the utmost celerity must be used, in order to fall on the enemy, while their hearts were panic struck at the loss of their leader, and having completely established his influence, the Nasamonian chiefs, together with their followers, who had already assembled as above-mentioned, mounted their horses, and encamped at two hours' distance from the salt-spring, the night after the pretended interment of Sesostris.

Anisis promised the next day to bring them on the Egyptians, and bade them for the present, rest in tranquillity, that they might be in full vigour to attack the foe. They were well prepared to acquiesce in this opinion, for joy relaxes the mind, and the Lybians, with the exception of one or two centinels, who watched or slept at the extremity of the camp, abandoned themselves to a repose from which many were destined never to awake.

Sesostris anxiously observed the passing moments, and marching from the salt-spring (to which point he had drawn his army as before concerted) fell on the Nasamones an hour after midnight. Their encampment was instantly a scene of blood and fire, and Moskar was startled from his sleep by the crackling of the burning tents, and the cry "Destiny is victorious."

To grasp his weapons, and fall in the thickest of the fray was the natural though useless effort of a warrior. The victory of Egypt could not be doubtful; yet as the son of Mœris afterwards viewed the wounds that disfigured the finely moulded form of the greatest of the Nasamones, he reflected with a sigh on the mutability of fortune, and perhaps trembled at the thought that courage might be undone by treachery.

Having thus subdued the next tribe in his course, Sesostris swept rapidly onwards towards the Atlantic ocean, while the nations he encountered, either submitted without a struggle, or vainly resisted his power. At

length he approached that vast extent of water which was to terminate his career westward, and it was with a feeling not unmixed with regret, he saw from a distance the tossing of the liquid world. He caused the camp to be pitched a short distance from the shore, whither he himself repaired, accompanied only by a few attendants to gaze on the sublime scene before him.

"Tell me, my Anisis," he said, "thinkest thou there are other nations beyond that briny plain, who feel like us the ecstasy of pleasure and the torture of sorrow?"

"I do, great prince," he replied; "for I behold yonder sun sinking to darkness as far to the westward of us as when we were in the palaces of Thebes, pouring the same flood of radiance over that extent of blue sterility which then brightened the Lybian chain."

"Then," answered Sesostris, "must we build a fleet, or my destiny will not be realized, since no trophies of conquest can be reared by mortals on the field of azure before us."

As he spoke these words, the sun disap-

peared, the sky at the same time becoming slightly overcast, and he had scarcely returned to the camp, when a tremendous storm of wind and rain came on, accompanied by thunder and lightning. Many of the tents were torn up, and great confusion for some time prevailed, while the tempest was at its height ; and Menros told Pakaris he really was not without apprehension that they who had passed so many dangers, were fated after all to be swept into the water, or burnt by the fire of Heaven.

About midnight the storm abated, though the thunder yet rolled at a distance, and the lightning flashed at intervals, when the son of Mœris, who had no desire to sleep, ascended a rock in the immediate vicinity of the shore, and contemplated with delight the ocean, still agitated by the influence of the late hurricane, like the human breast labouring beneath the impetus of some violent emotion scarcely hushed.

He returned at length to his couch, though not to repose ; for his mind was oppressed

with an undefined boding of evil as he lay thus at the utmost verge of earth, and listened to the mysterious blast—the eternal traveller alike of land and sea. Nor was his presage false, for early the next day messengers arrived from Egypt, who informed him that his father Mœris had been seized with a mortal disorder, and that they feared he was no longer in existence, though they had used the utmost despatch in conveying the information.

Full of grief at this intelligence, Sesostris instantly sat out on his return, but a vast tract of country was to be traversed, ere he could reach the valley of the Nile, and on arriving at Thebes he learnt that his Sire was already dead and embalmed. The garland of conquest was thus steeped in tears, yet the Egyptians could not but triumph in their exploits, and as they wept over the most virtuous of monarchs, they remembered with joy that his sceptre had passed to a son who seemed deservedly to have obtained the favour of the gods.

THE STORY OF SESOSTRIS,  
KING OF EGYPT, CONCLUDED.

On the death of his father, Sesostris saw himself at the head of a great and united\* people. He remembered the promise contained in the oracle from Heliopolis; and, when he considered the various provisions made by Mœris for its accomplishment, he felt as if the call of duty, as well as that of fame, demanded the earnest prosecution of conquest. He, therefore, summoned his warriors round him,

\* It seems, at least, doubtful whether all Egypt was united under one king, before the time of Sesostris. Heeren, in his *Researches*, supports the opinion that several dynasties existed together; the more powerful states occasionally swallowing up the weaker.



and prepared to march southwards into Ethiopia; while two vast fleets, built, the one in the Mediterranean, the other in the Arabian gulf, menaced Europe and Asia with slavery and desolation.

But victories abroad may bring ruin on the conquering state, if they are unaccompanied by stability at home; and the son of Mœris before his departure, endeavoured to provide for the happiness of his subjects and the regularity of government during his absence. He, accordingly, divided his kingdom into thirty-six districts, and entrusted the whole to the management of his brother—a man of considerable talent, and who seemed, to Sesostris, every way calculated to discharge the important duties of vicegerent.

All preliminaries being at length arranged, he left imperial Thebes early in spring, attended, as before, by Anisis, Pakaris, and Menros, as his principal ministers. The banks of the Nile were covered with veteran warriors, to whom war was become a sport; and the river itself foamed beneath the keels of innumerable

galleys, that attended the movements of the mightiest of monarchs. The distance between the most southern Egyptian frontier, and Meroe,\* the metropolis of Ethiopia, was considerable; yet reports of the extraordinary success of Sesostris had penetrated to that distant region, and had filled the queen † Nitrennis with much solicitude. She remembered the frequent hostilities, ‡ that had subsisted between her nation and that of Egypt,

\* Herodotus describes, at large, 'the common route from Elephantis, in upper Egypt, to Meroe, by land and water.—See his *Euterpe*, chap. 29. where also Meroe is called the metropolis of Ethiopia.

† The Ethiopian sceptre appears to have been occasionally wielded by a female; and, in many of the representations on Egyptian monuments, supposed to allude to the triumphs of Sesostris, a female captive, apparently of rank, is portrayed; whose colour, dress, etc., are, with much reason, considered Ethiopian.—See the first volume of Heeren's *Researches*, in the chapter entitled: "The state of Meroe and its monuments."

‡ It appears, from history and the monuments, that Egypt and Ethiopia were engaged in frequent wars.

and thought it was highly probable so powerful a king as the son of Mœris might employ his present good fortune against her. She, therefore, collected the force of the state, and prepared, in earnest, to resist the arms which had already deprived Lybia and Arabia of their liberty.

In the meantime, Sesostris and his army proceeded to Elephantis, where he resolved to review his troops, and then advance, with his wonted celerity, into the country of the enemy.

“Whither, in the name of Osiris, is our restless prince conducting us now, Anisis?” asked Menros, the first night they encamped at Elephantis; “what sort of people are these Ethiopians? for, if I mistake not, you have, in your thirst for travelling, visited them.”

“I have,” replied Anisis, “and can, therefore, inform you that they differ greatly from the Arabians and Lybians: if our elders tell us truly, we ourselves are sprung from their ancestors.\* The present Ethiopians resemble

\* Modern observation seems to have established the

us in many particulars," he continued, "though they have hitherto been considered more warlike."

"The worst difference that could have existed," said Menros; "yet let us hope the valour and good fortune of our monarch will still follow us."

"May it be so!" rejoined Anisis, "though I could almost wish we might experience a check; lest Sesostris should have the madness to proceed against that branch of the nation who inhabit the shores of the southern sea,\* whose lives are said to be equal to those of

fact, that civilization flowed into Egypt from the south; and that successive colonies from Meroe, following the course of the Nile, established themselves among, and gradually gained an ascendancy over, the native Egyptians.—See this theory ably supported in Heeren's Researches.

\* The Ethiopians called by Herodotus Macrobian, on account of their long life, are supposed to have lived beyond the Arabian gulf, near some part of the Indian ocean.—See the first volume of Heeren's researches, a geographical survey of the Ethiopians.

the gods, whose stature far exceeds our own, and whose arrows perforate steel as easily and instantaneously as the scorpion's sting pierces the skin."

The physician, who had been growing gradually paler, at the last words of Anisis, here gave a groan, and then added :—

"Heaven protect us from the Ethiopians who inhabit the shores of the southern sea. I would I had remained in obscurity, and that I had never been distinguished by the court; since honour at home is accompanied by so many perils abroad."

"Cheer up," said Pakaris, who now entered the apartment and guessed the subject of their conversation. "If I am rightly informed, Nitrennis, the Ethiopian queen, is a lover of talent, and will not fail, should we be overthrown and taken captives, to confer on you the privilege of being her physician; thus your fame will spread far to the south, and you will have the happiness of displaying your knowledge in embalming\* the dead."

\* The art of embalming seems to have been intimately

"Alas!" answered Menros, "I greatly fear we shall become mummies ourselves."

"Sooner or later, assuredly," replied Pakaris, "but it matters not whether this happen by an Ethiopian arrow or the stroke of disease."

"And, at all events," resumed Anisis, "we will entreat the gods that the soul of Menros, the physician, may not, after its three thousand years' transmigration,\* animate the body of a warrior."

Both his friends smiled at this conclusion of Anisis, and all three now talked on general subjects. Two days were spent at Elephantis;

connected with medicine; perhaps different causes of death required that different modes of preserving the dead should be adopted.

\* Herodotus says that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was derived from the Egyptians; and that they believed in a perpetual transmigration for three thousand years, at the end of which time the soul, having successively animated every species of irrational animals, again enters a human body.—See Herodotus' *Euterpe*, chap. 123.

and, on the third, Sesostris proceeded in the direction of Meroe.

The Ethiopians were informed of his approach ; and the appearance of a powerful army, when he was yet some distance from the place, warned him that his farther passage must be bought with blood. The Egyptians were, however, victorious, and Nitrennis, who had been saved from the field with difficulty, resolved to concentrate her remaining force for the defence of the peninsular,\* on which her capital stood.

Sesostris, who was well acquainted with the defensible nature of Meroe, now encamped at the distance of twenty miles from that district ; to consider on the best manner of attacking it, while Nitrennis resolved, if possible, to circumvent, by artifice, a foe who was every where superior in the field. She, accordingly despatched a messenger to the Egyptian camp,

\* Meroe is almost encompassed by the Nile, at the junction of another stream with that river.—See the first volume of Heeren's Researches

who was immediately introduced to the son of Mæris, and spoke as follows :—

“Nitrennis, our queen, thus addresses the invincible Sesostris,—Why should farther hostility exist between us ; for my part, I sicken at the remembrance of the animosity of our fathers, and should myself have remained contented with my own dominions. To thee, however, it seemed otherwise ; thy own happy land, with its bright skies and its fertile soil could not suffice thee. Arabia and Lybia have resisted thy arms in vain ; yet thou art still unsatiated with success, and burnest for fresh honours in these sequestered regions :—be it so. I am aware that mortal ambition knows not where to stop ; nor am I ignorant of the oracle by which men say thou art encouraged : yet why should farther bloodshed stain my country. Perhaps the payment of tribute will content thee ; if so, we may again sheath our swords, since Nitrennis prefers thus to profess herself conquered, to involving her people in the calamities of war. But, if thou desirest still greater triumph,—if



nothing but her captivity, and that of her two sons, will allay thy thirst of power, the same Nitrennis bids thee remember that there are yet many warriors around her person, and that the stream, whose arms embrace Meroe, may yet run purple with the blood that mantles in thine own veins. Be pacified then by our submission : let us meet each other half way between thy camp and my island, accompanied by a hundred followers, respectively ; the Ethiopians shall there spread a banquet for themselves and thee, and there we will fix the tribute and lay aside hostilities.”

Sesostris listened with much astonishment to this address, which he proposed to answer the following day ; and, for the present, ordered the ambassador to be entertained with becoming hospitality. It was resolved in council, to accede to the offers of the Ethiopian queen ; and the ambassador was despatched the next morning with a message to that effect, appointing the day after for the meeting of Sesostris and Nitrennis.

The queen of Meroe rejoiced that she had so far succeeded, and commanded the feast to be prepared in the most splendid manner. The place fixed on for the banquet was a spacious garden on the eastern bank of the Nile, about ten miles from the peninsular, where stood the Ethiopian capital. Many grottos and other buildings consecrated to pleasure embellished this retreat; and it had been long a favourite resort with the monarchs of Ethiopia.

In the meantime, the Egyptians spoke of nothing but the intended suspension of arms: Menros could hardly contain his spirits on the occasion; but their exuberance was somewhat checked by hearing Anisis say to Pakaris:—

“I fear we shall not settle matters so easily with the Ethiopians who dwell on the shores of the southern sea, should our king attack them also.”

The important morning at length dawned, and Sesostris, attended by Anisis, proceeded to the appointed place of meeting, leaving Pakaris in command, during his absence. Ni-

treennis received them with the utmost courtesy, and they were struck, not only with the splendour of the preparations, but also with the confidence and submission testified by the queen. She was indeed surrounded, according to agreement, by a hundred of her countrymen; but they were all unarmed, and the Egyptians, while they contemplated the magnificent garden, and the scene of peaceful festivity it contained, forgot that they were gazing on the same nation who, a few days since had striven for their destruction on a bloody and doubtful field.

Sesostris had been carefully instructed in the languages of those nations that more immediately surrounded Egypt, and he now proceeded to confer with Nitrennis, aided by one of her principal followers, on the nature and greatness of the tribute she was to pay, as an acknowledgment of his superiority. The conference ended amid their mutual smiles; and the son of Mœris said aloud in Ethiopian:—

“ Since the voice of war is happily hushed

between us, let us meet together at the banquet, in sign of peace; and let the venom of animosity cease to rankle in our hearts."

These words were repeated by Anisis in the Egyptian language; when, at the command of Sesostris, his countrymen laid aside their weapons; thus imitating the pacific appearance of the Ethiopians. Nitrennis motioned Sesostris to take an elevated seat, and placed herself near him on a lower one. One of the mightiest of her nobles was stationed on the other side of the son of Mœris; then sat Anisis, placed thus near his monarch, and Nitrennis, as being the most distinguished follower of Sesostris. By this arrangement, the leaders on both sides seemed implicitly to confide in each other. Yet national hatred cannot be dispelled by the professions of a moment; and it was observed that, either by design or accident, the Ethiopians, in taking their seats, did not mingle with the sons of Mizraim.

The feast was spread in the open air, and all were placed in order, so that every eye might

be regaled with the prospect of the majestic Nile, that flowed in front, on which the shadow of the regal palm reposed in unbroken tranquillity. On the right hand, and on the left, the various decorations of the retreat attracted the admiration of the Egyptians. Here elegant summer-houses and cool grottos fascinated the imagination, and seemed to deride, for ever, the approach of care ; and, at another point, small obelisks\* started up,—their sides adorned with climbing plants, while from their summits arose a stream of water as clear as the crystal, and as cold as the snow of the mountains.

The sun had passed the meridian, when the two nations commenced the repast ; and there appeared to the followers of Sesostris to be a pleasing resemblance between the hour when the fervour of day was abating, and the mutual demonstrations of peace by those who

\* Egyptian architecture seems to have had its origin in the south.—See Heeren's description of the monuments in the country above Egypt.

had, a short time since, been scorched by the fever of unslaked revenge. They rejoiced in their present advantage, and triumphed in their passed success; but they knew not that their own blood would, in a few moments, be mingled with the wine; they knew not that, in the thickly entangled trees behind them, two hundred of the flower of Ethiopia's archers—whose aim could not err, were ready to execute the perfidy of their queen.

In the meantime, Nitrennis watched her opportunity, as Sesostris was in deep conversation with the noble who sat near him; when clapping her hands, which was the appointed signal, a hundred bow-strings twanged at once, and the Egyptian king saw himself deprived of a hundred of his bravest followers; while, together with Anisis, he was instantly seized and bound. The voice of vengeance was now raised too late in his breast; for the Ethiopians, exulting in the accomplishment of their plan, lost not a moment in securing him and his attendant on horses; and, setting off at full speed, entered

the peninsular of Meroe; and the next day saw Sesostris and Anisis captives in the capital of Nitrennis.

The happiness of mutually interchanging their sentiments was denied them, as they were placed in different and distant apartments of a large building, strengthened by fortifications, and overlooking the Nile.

Pakaris and his countrymen had, as may be imagined, in vain expected the return of their monarch the evening before, and when at midnight, that return was still delayed, they were tortured with a thousand perplexities. Pakaris, however, endeavoured to allay the fears of the army, by arguments which had no weight in his own mind, and having taken every precaution against a surprise, rejoiced when after a sleepless night the day at length dawned.

Parties were now despatched in various directions in search of their king, but their efforts were fruitless, and their astonishment and rage knew no bounds when in the evening, an ambassador attended by a troop of Ethio-

pians arrived at the camp, who being admitted to Pakaris, delivered this message.

“ Our queen, Nitrennis, thus speaks. Sesostris is a destroyer of nations, but the gods are just, and your leader is now our captive, whose body, with that of his attendant shall be thrown headless into the Nile, if you do not immediately retire to your own territory and consent to pay tribute to the Ethiopians, giving hostages for the observance of this condition. I allow one day for consideration, but if the next sun after to-morrow beholds you still wavering, I swear by the great divinity of light and heat! that though my capital were invested by a thousand armies, Sesostris dies. Yet, perhaps,” continued the ambassador, “ you will not believe he has been vanquished and taken prisoner. Behold then this golden serpent,\* with eyes of ruby, that glittered on his dagger.”

\* A small serpent forms part of the dress of the Egyptian conqueror represented on the monuments, and it is conceived to have been the symbol of royalty.—See Heeren’s Researches, vol. ii, chap. iii.



The Egyptian saw, and shuddered at the token, while the ambassador concluded : —  
“ Such is my message ; rage will avail nothing, I return to my queen, yield to her mandate and save your king, whom your humility only can preserve, since the submission of Egypt can alone purchase his liberty.”

Having thus said, the Ethiopian disappeared with his troop, leaving the followers of Sesostris to execrate the perfidy of Nitrennis, and deplore their own credulity.

While these things were passing, Anisis, who from the moment of his capture, had entertained a firm confidence that he should by some means or other, set free both himself and his monarch from their present misfortunes, was pacing the apartment in which he was confined, when the Ethiopian especially appointed to guard him, brought him food. There was something in his countenance that forcibly arrested the Egyptian's attention, for an expression of deep sadness was on his features, and as he placed some refreshment on the table a half suppressed sigh escaped him. Anisis

could no longer resist the curiosity he felt to become more acquainted with his attendant, and therefore said :

“ The heart of one in grief is indeed a sanctuary into which a stranger can seldom be admitted, yet the capricious will of events brings us sometimes into collision with those who though utterly unknown, are nevertheless bound to us by the mysterious tie of sympathy, even as two shells that fit each other may be brought together beneath the sleepless ocean though the respective rocks that sustained them may be remote. I am indeed an Egyptian and thy captive, yet permit me to enquire the cause of thy grief, since I cannot behold a human breast labouring with sorrow, and at the same time feel my own serene.”

“ It is strange,” replied the Ethiopian, “ that thou shouldst take an interest in my woes ; yet thy humanity, perhaps, demands my confidence, and there is something in thy manner which irresistibly wins my regard. My name is Emrid, and I have experienced many vicissi-

tudes of fortune. I have at length, however, risen to opulence and the favour of my queen, who has committed to me and another officer, the care of this fortress. But my prosperity is vain, since my only son is at this moment stretched on the bed of mortal disease."

"Alas!" answered Anisis, "your calamity is indeed deep, yet it may possibly admit of a remedy: immortality is not granted to man, but his wisdom may draw from the secret essences of nature, virtues which can often arrest the stroke of death, since in the same elements there lurk the principles of health and destruction. Partly from my own studies," he continued, "and partly from my intimacy with the greatest physician in Egypt, I have acquired considerable knowledge of the healing art, and if you would permit me to see your son—"

Here he was interrupted by the Ethiopian, who said, as he seized him by the hand:—"You shall behold him instantly, and may the immortal powers aid your skill!"

So saying, he led him from the apartment and

after traversing several winding passages, Anisis was introduced into a large chamber, where he saw extended on a bed, and surrounded by attendants, the son of Emrid—on whose youthful and finely moulded features the hue of death seemed already spread. As they entered, the father was addressed by one of the assistants, who in a few broken sentences whispered that all hope was extinguished. A convulsion of agony passed over the countenance of Emrid, but Anisis, who had approached the bed and scanned attentively the young Ethiopian, intreated his parent not yet to despair.

The Egyptian always carried with him, when at a distance from his own country, certain powerful compounds, whose uses had been discovered by the genius, and revealed to him by the explanation of Menros; and as on his capture in the fatal garden he had only been disarmed, he still retained these valuable recipes, one of which he now prepared to administer to the son of Emrid. Every eye was fixed on Anisis and scarcely a breath was

drawn, as from a golden phial he poured a small draught down the throat of the apparently inanimate patient, he then ordered friction to be generally applied, and in about ten minutes, the lethargy began to break, and the light of existence again to dawn upon his face. Anisis then gave some farther directions, and in another hour Emrid saw with rapture that the disorder of his son had taken a favourable turn, and that his recovery appeared no longer doubtful.

“ Benevolent and wise Egyptian,” he said on returning to the apartment of Anisis, “ how can I hope to discharge the immense debt with which your invaluable services have loaded me !—Tell me,” he continued, “ how can Emrid the Ethiopian best shew his gratitude to his greatest benefactor ?”

“ Aid me in recovering my freedom,” answered the Egyptian, “ and furnish me with a bow, a quiver of arrows and an Ethiopian dress ; so shall we be bound to each other by ties of mutual gratitude ; and I swear, by the divinities of Egypt, to protect

your family should this capital be sacked by my countrymen."

"The boon you ask is full of danger," replied Emrid, "but the benefit you have conferred forbids me to waver. Raise the matting in that corner," pointing as he spoke, "and you will perceive a small slit in the floor; insert this dagger and you will find a board will open upon an unseen hinge—beneath this there is a sliding stone,\* moveable by applying your finger to a groove; a flight of steps will thus be discovered: descend them and traverse the passage beneath, the opening of which is beyond the fortress. I alone am possessed of this secret," he continued, "it was contrived by my father, who, in times of much trouble and disturbance, held this building, and by constructing this unknown egress, secured to himself, at any time, a certain escape.

\* Such sliding stones are not uncommon in some of the larger Egyptian buildings, the style of which, appears derived from Meroe, the scene of this story. There is a similar contrivance mentioned in the tale of Rameses.

I shall still have a difficult part to act, but the call of gratitude is imperious—you will find the weapons without: do not, however, forget to reclose the board and slide back the stone by a corresponding groove on the other side; should you neglect these directions, we may both be lost."

With these words, Emrid left him. Anisis waited till the evening, when refreshment was again brought him, and taking as much food as he could conveniently carry, he opened the trap door, removed the stone and descended the steps, carefully reclosing the entrance as the Ethiopian had recommended. He passed through the passage with ease—though it was perfectly dark—till his path was interrupted by a stone similar to that at the top of the flight of steps, moveable also by a groove. The next moment he emerged into open air and on reclosing the egress, found himself on the top of a bank in the midst of a thick plantation of shrubs which effectually concealed the entrance of the passage,—a circumstance still farther promoted by the exposed side of the

last mentioned stone, exactly resembling the wall on the bank.

He now looked around him, and discovered the bow, quiver of arrows and Ethiopian dress, of all which he possessed himself, having left his own habit within the cave. Thus equipped, he descended the bank which shelved towards the Nile, where he was rejoiced to see a boat fastened to one of the trees, either by accident, or the contrivance of Emrid. The moon was now risen, and Anisis passing slowly along the river, bent upon contriving some scheme for the liberation of his monarch, kept his eye fixed on the fortress, eager to find out, if possible, in what part of the edifice that monarch was imprisoned.

“ Perhaps he no longer lives,” he at length exclaimed to himself—“ perhaps treachery has already perfected its work. But can mortals controul the gods?—can the Oracle speak falsely?”

As these words escaped him, his attention was arrested by a tall figure standing in the moonlight before an open lattice, guarded by



strong bars, and he almost broke out into a shout of joy on perceiving that it was Sesostris. The part of the building he was now opposite, occupied a small strip of land that jutted into the river, and the window above mentioned, hung directly over the water, at the height of about thirty feet.

The first object of Anisis was to make himself known, and he therefore began to chant in a low voice, the dirge of Maneros.\* The son of Mœris was gratefully awakened by the strain from the unpleasing reflections in which he was engaged, and he exclaimed :

“ Great Osiris, what do I hear ! have the gods, in pity for my grief, thrown around me a rapturous delusion, or can it indeed be that Anisis is at liberty ? Yonder floating form,” he continued, “ greatly resembles my noble follower, though his dress is Ethiopian.”

\* Maneros, only son of Menes, the first king of Egypt, died prematurely, and a dirge was composed for him, which Herodotus says was the only song among the Egyptians, and the same author declares, that this song was called by Greeks the dirge of Linus. See Herodotus chap. lxxix.

“ I am indeed your follower ;” said Anisis, in an under tone, “ I have escaped from confinement, by what means I will hereafter relate, and have already felt many hours of unhappiness and sorrow more than compensated by this bright moment. But rend asunder those bars,” he continued in a scarcely audible voice, “ plunge into the stream, and we shall both be free.”

“ It is impossible,” replied Sesostris, proving his words at the same time, by vainly shaking the firm iron work ; “ they open like a gate,” he continued, “ for I saw the Ethiopian who conducted me hither, close and fasten them with a key.”

“ Then,” said Anisis, “ our great leader shall still be at liberty.”

“ Hush !” cried Sesostris, “ I hear the approach of the officer who guards me.”

“ Draw him then by some means to the window ; and when there, seize him.”

Sesostris could not comprehend the intention of his follower, but he had seen so many proofs of his dexterity that he resolved to acquiesce. Tarcon, the principal officer who

guarded the son of Mœris, was now in the apartment, when the latter said to him:—  
“ Methinks I see watch-fires yonder, they are, perchance, my faithful Egyptians hastening to avenge their monarch.”

Tarcon, in astonishment, approached the window and was instantly seized by the sinewy arms of Sesostris, while at the same moment, Anisis exclaimed:—“ Be silent, Ethiopian, and open those bars, or thy heart shall instantly be transfixed by this shaft which thou seest is already fitted in the string;—make not the slightest resistance to my orders, for, I warn thee, I never miss my aim.”

Tarcon’s bosom palpitated, yet he shuddered at thus with his own hands, being instrumental to the escape of his important captive; he therefore made an effort to extricate himself from the grasp of Sesostris, at the same time, threatening the stranger in the boat with the displeasure of Nitrennis. A smile of contempt passed over the face of Anisis, who, without deigning a reply, drew the bow to its full extent, pointing the barb at the breast of

Tarcon saying at the same time:—"Resolve thyself, vain boaster!—I give thee but this moment; choose life or death!"

At these words, the Ethiopian lost all courage, and replied:—"I will open the iron work," drawing from his belt as he spoke a key of peculiar form.

"Execute my bidding speedily," said the persevering Anisis, "for see, the arrow longs to fly from the string."

Tarcon instantly obeyed, for he was eager to escape from his perilous situation, and touching a spring, the gate opened outwards, when Sesostris, violently wresting from him the key, quitted his hold of the Ethiopian and plunged into the river. The next moment he was in the boat, and as they rapidly crossed to the other side, they congratulated each other on the success of their project.

Anisis especially admired the foresight which had prompted his monarch to possess himself of the key, a circumstance which would, they hoped, so implicate Tarcon in the flight of Sesostris, as to make the Ethio-

pian the less eager to divulge it. Nor were they deceived, for no sooner was the officer delivered from the apprehension of the unknown archer, than he became a prey to intense anxiety on another account, namely, how he should explain the loss of his captive. Full of this difficulty, he sought his friend Emrid, and intreated his advice.

“ I know I may depend on your fidelity,” he said, “ for our friendship has been cemented by time ; I will not, therefore, conceal from you an affair that has happened to me this night, and which threatens to involve me in ruin.”

He then related every thing connected with the escape of Sesostris, and thus concluded :—  
“ How shall I defend my conduct—how account for the loss of my key, which will be an evidence to all, that it was my own hand which freed him ? I might as well have been shot through the heart at once, when standing at the window, as have to expect a similar, or worse

death by order of the queen—alas, Emrid !  
how shall I act ?”

“ If a similarity of destiny,” replied Emrid,  
“ strengthens friendship, ours may surely become indissoluble, for it is not many hours since I myself, yielding to a train of extraordinary circumstances, became accessory to the flight of the captive confided to my care, and consequently involved in the same difficulty with you. Be persuaded then, by me,” he continued, “ let both of us act as if our prisoners were still in our custody, as no one but ourselves is acquainted with what has happened, and I am farther of opinion, that since the Egyptian king is fairly at liberty, we had better make our own terms with him and admit him into this fortress ; for, mark me, Tarcon, the escape of Sesostris must become known sooner or later. Nitrennis will then be furious, and it will be highly advantageous to us to secure the success of the Egyptians, that we may have a powerful friend to screen us from her rage.”

“Your reasoning is excellent,” rejoined Tarcon, “and I will follow it: while Sesostris was here, I strictly guarded him, and would have continued to do so had he remained, but the gods willed otherwise, and we mortals ought not to struggle against their decrees.”

The friends now separated, and went to guard each an empty apartment with much assiduity.

In the meantime, it had been determined in the Egyptian camp, on the news of the capture of their king, to dispatch an embassy the next day to Meroe, in order to negotiate with Nitrennis; and the sons of Mizraim experienced the utmost astonishment and delight, when, about two hours after sunrise, a party who had gone out to examine the surrounding country returned, bringing with them their monarch and Anisis, whom they had despaired of recovering, except by the sacrifice of their country's superiority. Some of them still trembled lest Sesostris might have purchased his liberty by some concession; yet most of his warriors believed he would rather

have yielded up his life, than given way to temporary calamity, and when the particulars of his escape were known, all vied with each other in praising their valiant leader and the versatile Anisis.

They now deliberated as to the next step, and were still undecided, when about an hour before noon, a horseman was seen approaching the camp. He proved to be a messenger from Emrid and Tarcon, inviting Sesostris to attack Meroe the ensuing night, promising to admit any number of troops into the fortress, of which they said they had the entire disposal.

The son of Mæris reflected for a moment, but at length remembering that with his troops around him, he had ever been invincible, he signified to the messenger that he accepted the offer. He accordingly divided his forces into two divisions, one of which he put under the command of Pakaris, and led the other in person ;—intending that the former should attack the peninsula of Meroe, where it joined the main-land, while he proposed to take advantage of the surrender of the fortress, and



thus expose himself to any unknown dangers incident to the enterprise.

The whole army marched in the evening with celerity and secresy, and Pakaris appeared at the entrance of the peninsula an hour before midnight. The trampling of his troops had already alarmed the Ethiopians, who kept an unceasing watch at this point, and their principal strength was immediately in action against the Egyptians.

Nitrennis was speedily informed of these circumstances, and in the utmost rage at the coolness with which her threats concerning Sesostis had been received, despatched orders to Tarcon and Emrid instantly to put to death their respective captives, and as soon as possible expose their heads to the two contending parties. At the same time the Ethiopians at the entrance of the peninsula were reinforced, and night, the destined repose of nature, was there a scene of terror and confusion. Above the warriors the moon, now at its full, was shining in majestic tranquillity, whilst on the field below (amid the gleam of watch-fires,

the crash of cymbals, and the shouts of infuriated foes) showers of arrows and waving swords fearfully demonstrated the violence of human passion. While these things were passing, Sesostris, with a small portion of his army, had been guided by a short route, pointed out by some captives taken in the first battle, to a part of the territory of Meroe, fixed on by Tarcon and Emrid, opposite the fortress, where he found several large boats ready to transport him across the Nile. Here he met with no opposition, for the officers to whom the above-mentioned fort was intrusted, had well organized their plan, and the son of Moeris, with his followers, on crossing the river, encountered the same messenger who had already proposed to surrender.

In the utmost silence the latter pointed out to Sesostris the direction he should take, and in a few moments the Egyptian and his troops were within the fortress. When there, he stationed three hundred men in the most important part of the building to ensure its possession, and marching forward, fell on the

rear of the Ethiopians already engaged with Pakaris. The former were instantly seized with panic, for they knew not by whom they were attacked, since they had placed centinels in every accessible point of their peninsula ; but when they heard the terrible name of Sesostris, whom they had considered in the hands of their queen, astonishment and fear became more destructive than the weapons of the Egyptians.

Nitrennis shuddered at the information that the entrance of the peninsula was forced, yet an attendant endeavoured to console her with the hope of escaping to the Macrobian, and advised her immediate flight to the fort, overlooking the Nile, as being the strongest post in her territory. Nitrennis listened to the counsel, and rushed into instant captivity.

The Ethiopians now found it impossible to rally, and the rising sun beheld Meroe and its queen in the power of Sesostris. The whole nation except the Macrobian, submitted to Egypt, and the representation of his royal captive, and the triumphs of his arms sculp-

tured on the eloquent stone, transmitted to future ages the greatness of the son of Mœris. Yet that greatness appeared to him incomplete while he beheld a powerful state still unsubdued ; and he accordingly resolved, after receiving reinforcements, to penetrate still farther to the south, and attack the Ethiopians, who were yet unconquered, and who were reputed the most warlike of nations.

In the mean time dangers were arising on the Egyptians from a source wholly unknown to them. Tarcon and Emrid, whose services had been so valuable, were richly recompensed by Sesostris. They were invited to settle in Egypt, or if they preferred remaining in their own country, were offered a large tract of land, and an immunity from all tribute. Yet there are breasts in which satisfaction can never have a place, and neither the courtesy of Sesostris, nor his liberal offers, could fix in his interest the restless spirit of Tarcon. On one hand the remembrance of his treason, and on the other, jealousy of all rivals tormented him.

“ Was I not (he thought within himself)

the principal author of the Egyptian's success? But for me, their proud leader might have lost his head, and even, when at liberty, might have wasted his force to no purpose before Meroe, and shall he estimate these services lightly? I expected to have reigned supreme in his confidence, and to have directed his councils; while the highest compensation his liberality and gratitude can devise, is either a settlement here or in Egypt, and freedom from tribute. Is it for this that I have betrayed my trust? But I will redeem my treachery," he continued, "and avenge Nitrennis. I will fly to the Macrobian, the mightiest of warriors, and will prove to the haughty Sesostris that the enmity of Tarcon is as destructive as his friendship was beneficial. March on, then, proud king, vaunting in thy past triumphs, and lulled into the lethargy of confidence, yet know that every step is surrounded by snares and death."

Having by such reflections as these somewhat tranquillized his feelings, he sought an

opportunity of withdrawing without suspicion from the camp, and during the intervening time, partly discovered his sentiments to Emrid, whom he endeavoured to influence against the son of Moëris.

“Can you endure in silence,” he said, “the want of consideration with which we are treated? Dangerous and important services should at least secure considerable advantage to those who confer them. But what have we gained by the friendship of the Egyptians beyond wealth and tranquillity? Both of these we equally enjoyed under Nitrennis. Know you not we are traitors, and shall we arm against ourselves the torment of remorse, and yet lose the fruits of our perfidy? For my part, I am determined to leave the Egyptian king, and seek elsewhere a field where my genius may display itself.

“It appears that an embassy to the Macrobians is partly resolved on; of this embassy I shall propose myself as the conductor, and afterwards be governed as circumstances may

direct. For you, Emrid, if you can obliterate the remembrance of the past, and sustain the dishonour of the present hour, remain with your new patron, and spend the rest of your existence in inglorious tranquillity."

Emrid heard with astonishment the passionate expostulations of Tarcon; but his growing admiration of Anisis, and his obligations to that Egyptian, together with a different turn of mind, prevented him from inwardly acquiescing in the line of conduct which these expostulations pointed out. He, however, feigned a compliance with Tarcon, in order that by accompanying him in his desertion of Sesostris, he might penetrate and baffle any scheme entered into by the Ethiopian, to the detriment of that monarch. He accordingly pretended to echo the sentiments of Tarcon, and they both agreed that the intended deputation to the Macrobian afforded the greatest facility for the prosecution of their new design.

They found no difficulty in obtaining the consent of Sesostris that they should conduct the embassy. He could not refuse his con-

fidence to men, who, by the indelible wrongs they had committed against their country seemed bound to his interest by a tie stronger than a thousand professions. Besides which, they were Ethiopians, and there appeared to the king of Egypt many advantages in that circumstance, while a happy termination of the affair was further secured by the choice of approved and experienced Egyptians for their associates.

The object of the embassy was to endeavour to win the Macrobian king to the interest of Egypt, by representing, on the one hand, the vast resources of Sesostris, and, on the other, the easy terms by which his friendship might be obtained; namely, by the payment of a moderate tribute. This measure was dictated by the extraordinary accounts the Egyptians had received of the prowess of the above nation;—accounts which weighed heavily, even on the minds of troops who had never been repulsed.

Every thing arranged, the deputation left the camp; and, shortly after, supplies arrived



from Egypt. The Egyptians now began to march southwards, under the pretence of surveying the rest of the country they had already conquered; but, in reality, because their monarch could not help suspecting that his embassy would be in vain, and was desirous to gain as much time as possible, in case he might have to invade the Macrobian.

His emissaries at length reached that nation, where Kroban had just been elected\* king, and with whom their negociation immediately commenced. Tarcon, however, contrived to gain access to the latter, before his associates in the deputation, and inflamed the haughty spirit of that monarch, by every incentive his mind could suggest.

“Shall the puny inhabitants of the valley of the Nile despise thee,” he said, “by recommending thee to submit to a tribute, as if

\* The king of the Macrobian Ethiopians was elected; and superior strength and stature were the qualifications requisite for the successful candidate.—See Herodotus' *Thalia*, chap. 20.

they had been victorious over the Macrobian? They have, indeed, conquered Meroe ; but it was by treachery, and not by force ; of that treachery I confess myself to have been partly the instrument ; yet, when mighty Kroban hears the strange circumstances in which I was then involved, he will, perhaps, pardon the perfidy which was, in some sort, unavoidable ; and which, being once freed from the tyrant who enforced it, I burn to wash from the memory of man with the blood of Sesostris. Reject, then, the terms he offers ; call thy warriors around thee ; bend your bows, and sweep to destruction the northern usurpers."

Kroban was, naturally, sufficiently hostile to the Egyptians, and listened, with delight, to the proposal of Tarcon.

The rest of the deputation had an interview with the monarch, from which they departed, bearing to Sesostris a defiance instead of a submission ; while Emrid and Tarcon suddenly left their companions, and remained with the Macrobian ; the one designing to support, the other to ruin the Egyptian cause.

The emissaries of Sesostris returned to their king ; who, in consequence of what they reported, hastened his march, and, at length, arrived within a day's journey of the territory of the Macrobian. No enemy had yet appeared near ; nor had anything happened of importance, except the capture of a small party of Ethiopians, who were totally without arms, and apparently in complete destitution. When taken, they laid terrible complaints on Kroban, who, as they affirmed, wholly bent on his own preservation, had fled to his capital ; having defied the Egyptian monarch in words only, whilst, in reality, he could not endure the thought of meeting him in the field.

Sesostris had of late experienced too many vicissitudes hastily to credit this news, which, however, greatly relieved the minds of his followers. The above mentioned captives were now dismissed, and the Egyptians pressed forward to the first Macrobian city, where every thing bore testimony to what they had heard. All here wore the appearance of the hurried departure of the inhabitants ; and a

few of these, whom nothing but old age or sickness seemed to have detained, painted in lively colours the terror of Kroban and their countrymen.

“Our king,” they said, “desires, after all, to have peace with Sesostris, whom, he knows, it is in vain to resist. Would that he had yielded before he had brought a hostile army upon our cities !”

The son of Mœris bade them tranquillize their fears ; saying, it was his wish to preserve, and not to destroy them ; and that he should seize eagerly any opportunity of treaty with Kroban.

The same appearance of fear, and the same tokens of the flight of their king were exhibited in the three Macrobian cities that lay next in the Egyptian’s route, the last of which seemed to have been abandoned with peculiar precipitation ; since not only some gold, but even a few heaps of copper,\* were discovered here

\* Copper is said to have been the metal most esteemed by the Macrobian Ethiopians.—See Herodotus’

and there; as if they had been brought out of some depository, with an intention of carrying them away, and afterwards left, for want of time. Bows, arrows, and other arms were also scattered around; and, to crown all, many of the crystal tombs\* of the Ethiopians were to be seen in the suburbs, some untouched, and some without the bodies; as though these had been hastily snatched by their flying relatives. A few individuals, who still remained in the city came and prostrated themselves before Sesostris; complained to him of the pusillani-

Thalia, chap. 23. The Greek word, χαλκος, should be translated, copper; since brass is an artificial compound.

\* The Macrobian Ethiopians, after embalming their dead, wrapped them in some kind of plaster, on which a portrait of the deceased was drawn; and the whole was then deposited in a case formed of a soft species of crystal, abounding in the country. These Sarcophagi were kept, for a certain time, by the relatives of the dead, and treated with great respect; after which, they were placed in the suburbs.—See Herodotus' Thalia, chap. 24.

mity of their king ; described the weak and distracted condition of their state,—and implored him to spare and protect from violence what was yet left them.

The son of Mœris had hardly re-assured them by his promises, when a Macrobian, apparently in declining age, with his face smeared with blood, and his robe tattered, broke into the circle with a terrible outcry ; and, falling on his knees before Sesostris, exclaimed :—

“ Help me, mighty king ! for those eyes of fire, and that regal form can assuredly belong to none but the monarch of Egypt—aid me against oppression. A small band of your troops, regardless of my entreaties, came upon me as I was escaping with my only daughter, some gold, and the sepulchre of my wife. What can the unassisted hand of age avail against armed warriors ? I was instantly wounded ; and the carriage on which my daughter and my goods were placed would have fallen into their power, if some of my countrymen had not perceived my distress, and driven back the Egyptians. Yet though

they retired, they threatened to pursue us with greater numbers :—come then, oh king !” he continued, “and guard us with your presence.”

The appeal was not in vain ; for the king of Egypt, ever eager to avenge the unfortunate, and anxious to repress every indication of licence in his army, summoned Anisis and Menros to attend him and followed the Macrobian. He led them, with every demonstration of haste on his countenance, through several turnings, till they found themselves without the city, among the sarcophagi : and then, seeming to listen, he exclaimed :—

“I hear distant voices ; let us speed, they are seizing my daughter.”

The three Egyptians quickened their pace ; when Menros whispered to Anisis :—

“I wish we may be running after no harm ; but there is something by no means to my taste in walking thus, with no other company but yon tall forms, in their crystal cases, and pursuing a stranger whose appearance I do not like.”

“I am not myself entirely without appre-

hension ;” rejoined Anisis, “but see, our monarch has got the start of us ; let us hasten to his side.”

“Most willingly,” answered the physician, “for our own sakes as well as his. O that he were less adventurous !”

Sesostris had, in fact, left his followers a few paces behind, and the latter were exerting themselves to overtake him, when they heard the Ethiopian in front give a shrill whistle, and a large body of his countrymen, rushing from behind a row of tombs ; they were surrounded, and, together with their monarch, at the same moment, overpowered. All three were now secured ; while their pretended guide threw off his tattered robe, and said to the son of Mœris :—

“We are well met, most potent leader ; and you doubtless perceive that Tarcon is as dexterous in seizing, as in aiding the escape of an Egyptian. My king, Kroban, is not far distant ; from him you will certainly experience a becoming reception ; and he will, probably, in consideration of your fame, permit that the



manner of your death shall be such, as not to prevent you from being embalmed—a condescension which will give you and your two attendants, the honour of taking your station in transparent sepulchres among the Macrobianians.”

Such was the vaunt of Tarcon, at whose suggestion Kroban had resolved to confirm the confidence, and abate the vigilance of the Egyptians, by causing that part of his dominions, through which they would first pass, to wear the semblance of fear, above described. He had drawn his forces together at a point where two ridges of hills rose, the one on the right hand, the other on the left of the plain, which Sesostriis would probably traverse; and here, placing his Ethiopians on both sides, concealed by the rising ground, he intended to rush on the enemy when marching in careless assurance. Yet his indefatigable emissary Tarcon was continually on the watch for any opportunity that might present itself of farther annoying Sesostriis, whom he had at length, as we have seen, succeeded in se-

parating from his troops, and capturing, together with Anisis and Menros.

It was mid-day when these things took place ; and Tarcon, considering the near neighbourhood of the Egyptian army, and the danger of encountering any of their detached parties, retreated, with his important prize, to a large cavern in the vicinity ; from which, in ancient times, that kind of soft crystal had been dug, which was employed for the Macrobian dead. Here, accordingly, Sesostris and his followers were, for the present, hidden ; and a messenger was despatched to receive the orders of Kroban concerning them. In two hours he returned, saying they were to be put to death, and afterwards embalmed ; in order that Kroban might constantly have before his eyes the person of him who had once been the terror of nations.

Emrid had watched, with increasing solicitude, every proceeding of Tarcon ; he had observed, with alarm, the admirable position chosen by Kroban, and had shuddered at the accounts, brought by spies, of the hourly in-

creasing confidence and security of the invading army. He had, moreover, been constrained to aid Tarcon in taking the son of Mœris; and beheld, without being able to check, the success of the project. Yet his mental torture was increased tenfold, by the necessity he was under of counterfeiting the utmost hostility against the three prisoners, and the highest joy at the mandate of the Macrobian king. He represented to Tarcon that they should be executed and embalmed that very night; of all which he proposed to take the management, saying he was determined to share the glory of destroying their common foe.

Whilst he was speaking to this effect, another messenger arrived, from Kroban, summoning Tarcon to the Ethiopian camp; who, as he departed, entreated Emrid to lose no time in despatching the Egyptians.

Sesostris and his two followers were now in the cave, reflecting on the various turns in their fortune, and endeavouring to console each other in their present distress, by enumerating their passed escapes from what

seemed inevitable destruction ; and by calling to mind the oracle from Heliopolis.

“ It is all very well,” thought Menros, “ for our leader to draw consolation from the promises of Heaven. Those promises declare he shall be invincible—be it so ; but what is this to Anisis, or myself, who are unhappy enough to be entangled in his calamities, without having any such assurance to depend on.”

These meditations were interrupted by the entrance of Emrid, attended by two others, carrying a quantity of plaster, a vessel of water, and some other apparatus. The physician started from his reverie, and enquired their business.

“ We are come to embalm you,” they replied, “ and wrap you in plaster.”

“ We are not yet dead,” said Menros, hardly able to articulate, from fear.

“ That difficulty will be speedily removed,” one of them rejoined, and then addressing his companion, “ Measure the captives,” he said, “ and report their dimensions to the cutters of crystal ; and bid them lose no time in making their tombs.”

He obeyed : and the Egyptians almost bade adieu to hope, as, with a leather thong, he ascertained the size of each.

“ Where is the poison ?” asked Emrid.

“ In that goblet,” was the reply,

“ Stay at the entrance of the cave, till I call you,” rejoined Emrid, and they departed.

The Ethiopian now approached the captives, and, motioning them to observe the strictest silence, unfastened, with the greatest rapidity, the cords that bound them ; and then whispered :—

“ This cave has two openings ; a circumstance well known to me when I proposed it to Tarcon as a place of concealment : bare your feet, and follow.”

He now led them to the back part of the excavation ; and, removing some rubbish with as little noise as possible, discovered a passage, so low as obliged them to enter it on their hands and knees. They continued to traverse it with the utmost haste, and after taking two or three turnings, once more found themselves on the open plain ; when Emrid said to Anisis :—

“ Could you suppose I had deserted my benefactor, and the great Sesostris ? no ; the voice of gratitude is not silent in my breast. I saw Tarcon about to betray your interests ; and seemed to follow him, that I might defeat his machinations. But let us mount,” he continued, pointing, as he spoke, to some horses belonging to Tarcon’s band, “ let us fly from hence, and I will reveal all the stratagems of the Macrobian king ; which, had they taken effect, would have rendered the most resolute valour, and wisest conduct impotent and useless.”

They soon arrived at the Egyptian camp, where Pakaris was already uneasy at the absence of his monarch ; the recital of whose adventures made his followers, at the same moment, tremble and rejoice.

Tarcon, when he learned the escape of the Egyptians, and the desertion of Emrid, took horse, and was never afterwards heard of ; while the son of Mœris, profiting by the discovery of the Macrobian’s plans, avoided many perils, in which he might have been overwhelmed.

The Ethiopians were, indeed, possessed of in-

trepid valour; but Sesostris was destined to prevail. He subdued that mighty people; and a prodigious quantity of gold,\* ebony, and ivory was poured into the treasury of Egypt. History relates that Europe also felt the power of Sesostris; and that the Scythians, who covered with dishonour the Persian diadem,† fled before his arms; while Asia, as far as the Ganges, confessed his superiority. He is said, however, to have been recalled by domestic treason, and to have seen his triumphs tarnished by some unhappiness. Yet he shines forth on the historic page the greatest of conquerors; and some of the proudest monuments of Egyptian art arose to attest his fame.

\* This metal was so common among the Macrobian, that even the fetters for their prisons were made of it.—See Herodotus' *Thalia*, chap. 23.

† Darius Hystaspes, was repulsed by the Scythians, whom he invaded.

THE STORY OF RHAMPSINITUS  
AND THE ARCHITECT.

THE smiles of fortune are as capricious as her frowns : the former are not confined to the worthy, nor the latter to the undeserving. It might perhaps be well for society, if virtue were always gifted with dexterity, and vice and dishonesty never accompanied by ingenuity. Yet this state of things seems at variance with the laws of the moral atmosphere that surrounds us ; virtue is free and unsuspecting, while dishonesty is compelled by necessity to investigate every means of carrying her projects into effect : dexterity thus appears almost necessary to her existence, and it is therefore



no wonder if by study and exercise she acquires it.

Rhampsinitus, fourth monarch of Mizraim from Sesostris, whose fleets and armies had swept with invincible rapidity over land and sea, was the proprietor of overflowing wealth. Egypt, herself, the richest of nations, was dazzled by the splendour of his treasury, and the coffers of his most opulent successors contained not the half of his riches. He adorned with magnificent works the Temple of Vulcan and two colossal statues, the one of winter, and the other of summer, discoursed to future ages in eloquent silence of the genius of their founder. Strong from within and without, his kingdom flourished under his sway, and if the happiness of his subjects be the criterion of the greatness of a monarch, Rhampsinitus had few rivals. Yet poverty and misfortune can never be excluded from the most flourishing kingdom, and in Egypt there were those who only beheld the wealth and happiness that surrounded them, to sicken at their own want and destitution.

Among these was an architect, named Rachis, a man of considerable ingenuity. He had received his trade, the only estate bequeathed him, from his father, to whom it had been left by his ancestors, according to the usage\* of the country.

The father of Rachis had been unfortunate and generous, and he was too often taught that though there were many who were willing to profit by his liberality, there were few to alleviate the other circumstance of his life.

“How opposite,” he would often say (with a sad pleasantry to which he was addicted,) “is my destiny to that of the birds; they build their own nests, heedless each of his feathered companions, whilst I on the contrary, who

\* The Egyptians always received their trades or professions from their ancestors in perpetual succession. The son of an embalmer, for instance, was an embalmer himself, the son of an architect was an architect, etc. See Herodotus' *Euterpe*. The same custom seems to have been observed by the Hindoos, it may indeed have checked discontent, but it must often have clipped the wings of genius.

have built houses for many, have scarcely procured for myself a home."

Such had been the father of Rachis, who appeared in all respects his very echo, except that he seemed still more proscribed by fortune. His affections were warm, and his intellect keen and penetrating; the former prompted him to marry the daughter of a kinsman, whose dowry consisted of a tolerable share of beauty, liveliness of character, and an affectionate disposition. The complexion of his destiny now assumed a somewhat brighter hue: his services were contracted for by a rich merchant, whose remuneration placed him in a state, which to him appeared affluence.

They celebrated with gaiety and eagerness Egypt's many festivals,\* entertained their friends with hospitality, and gave to several of their acquaintance, by liquidating their debts,

\* The Egyptian year was enlivened by a great number of sacred feasts, in which the worship of the gods was blended with festivity.—See an account of these fairs in the Euterpe of Herodotus.

the sacred delight of once more receiving to their arms the mummies\* of their dead.

Two years of happiness were thus passed, and they might have been the harbingers of many more, if Rachis could have imagined that the colour of the future must be ensured in the present hour, and that he whose only smiles flow from the favour of ever varying fortune, will probably have cause at least to sigh from her frowns. This, however, formed no part of his creed, and prudence was not amongst the accomplishments of Phiris, the partner of his fortunes.

He was now the father of two sons, named Sares and Salacris, whose increasing years demanded with an imperious voice his affections, and the skilful management of his affairs. His heart spontaneously bestowed the former,

\* The Egyptians used to embalm their dead, and keep them in that state with much care in their houses, till they were at length deposited in family sepulchres. If an Egyptian debtor was insolvent, his creditors might seize the mummies he possessed as a security for the debt, which it was considered most disgraceful not to redeem.

but to the latter he was a stranger. He was much addicted to jesting, and when under the influence of wine, not unfrequently gave way too freely to that perilous pleasure.

There was amongst his acquaintance a certain merchant, named Socon, a man who had raised himself to opulence by considerable industry. But as industry is necessarily long in achieving its objects, he had found out certain short cuts to wealth, not always of the most respectable kind ; there were even slight whispers of his having engaged with a party of desert banditti to rob a valuable caravan, for the consideration of sharing the booty. This circumstance, however, passed for mere scandal.

Yet Socon, grasping and envious, timid and revengeful, was the very opposite to Rachis. His person was short, and inclined to be corpulent ; his countenance in the highest degree repulsive, and those who were ignorant of the fact that Rachis had occasionally had the fortune or the unhappiness of pecuniary assistance from him, wondered how men, so much the reverse of each other, should keep

up the slightest acquaintance. But though they sometimes met at a private banquet, or a public festival, friendship could not subsist between them.

Rachis did not always restrain his sarcastic humour, and it was impossible that the merchant (who disliked all jokes,) should make an exception in favour of those, of which himself was the object. Yet if Socon was only tolerated by Rachis, he was actually hated by Sares and Salacris, who, as they grew up, had scarcely power or inclination to abstain from demonstrations of their disgust. The elements of a conflagration were thus ready, and an incident soon called them into action. A feast was given by Rachis to all his kindred, to which Socon was invited, and the banquet was spread in the garden beneath the delicious light of a summer evening,—such as smiles in the climes of Egypt.

Whilst some were partaking of this, others were inspecting the various ornaments with which the taste of their host had decorated his residence. Amongst these was a piece of

water of moderate extent, in which was kept a sacred crocodile\* after the manner of Egypt. The animal was decorated with valuable jewels, the care and skill of man had obliterated his native ferocity, and he was so tame as to follow Rachis everywhere at the ringing of a small bell. It was towards this pond that Sares and Salacris, bent upon their mischievous design, allured the reluctant Socon. The pleasures of the table were to him almost omnipotent, and he was with difficulty prevailed on by the youths to leave it for a moment. Had he entertained the slightest idea he was about to approach a crocodile, he would as soon have thrown himself into the Nile at once.

The basin was carefully railed round, and

\* The crocodile was held sacred in Egypt, and they were often kept by individual families in great splendour, adorned with valuable ornaments, and when dead, carefully embalmed.—See Herodotus Euterpe. The animal is believed to have been considered by the Egyptians an emblem of Typhon, the principle of destruction. See a discussion of this subject in the story of Rameses.

the iron work covered with creeping plants. The water itself, which was adorned in several places with the hallowed lotos,\* was accessible by a flight of steps, at the top of which was fixed a gate, and at the other end an elegant miniature pier constructed of twisted iron work, stretched some yards from the bank, from which, by a slight ladder which could be drawn up and let down at pleasure, Rachis could reach a boat floating beneath. To this pier his two sons introduced the merchant, having first ascertained that the crocodile was no where to be seen. They purposely avoided mentioning the gateway at the top of the flight of steps, and it was sufficiently hid from

\* Both collectively, and in each individual part, the lotos was held by the Egyptians emblematical and sacred. Never sinking below the water in which it grows, it represents the ark floating upon the deluge, described perhaps in Egyptian mythology by the sacred chest of Osiris, the personification of nature, who is related by the Egyptian priests to have been overpowered for a time by Typhon, the principle of destruction.—See the story of Rameses, and the authorities there adduced.



cursory view by the innumerable climbing plants and branches of trees bending to the very water.

They however invited him with all imaginable courtesy into the boat, and were themselves astonished at the courage and alacrity with which he descended the ladder, having first stipulated returning to the banquet after once traversing the pond. He little thought that, in a few moments, skill in rowing would perforce be added to his other accomplishments.

Watching an opportunity while the merchant was taking his seat, Sares fastened the bell, whose slightest sound could attract the crocodile, on the stern of the boat, and then, together with his brother, re-ascended the ladder, pretending to have left some part of the boat's furniture. Salacris, who first reached the pier, instantly loosened three of the four clasps which sustained the ladder, whilst his confederate Sares purposely paused in the ascent and amused the attention of Socon; but when he also was at the summit

he pretended to stumble, uttering at the same time a cry of terror, and the plot being now ripe, the last clasp was unbound, and to the dismay of the merchant the ladder fell, as if it had been broken down, thus cutting off his retreat. Nor was this the worst ; in its fall it struck the bell, which instantly roused the crocodile, and Socon felt his hair stand on end with terror, when he perceived the monarch of the aquatic palace emerge from a shady recess, and approach the boat.

Instantly seizing the oars, which he had scarcely ever handled in his life, he began to pull away from the animal. The ringing of the fatal bell was increased by the motion, and the crocodile followed more speedily. Sares and Salacris now fled as if for help, having first, both by words and gestures, exhorted Socon to row with his utmost force ; those exhortations were needless, and they burst into fits of suppressed laughter, when through a small gap in the fence behind, which they had planted themselves, they beheld the fat merchant, to whom fear had wonderfully

supplied the place of experience, rowing round and round the basin, dashing the water into foam, and making all the while the most terrible grimaces, the bell still ringing, and the indefatigable crocodile following with unabating perseverance.

As he passed the flight of steps, he cast a wistful eye at them, but the imaginary enemy was so near that he dared not stop for a moment. Perceiving, however, that such unaccustomed exertion would soon exhaust him, he resolved upon another expedient, and seizing some branches of a tree inclining towards the water, he endeavoured to climb into it from the boat, which, in springing upwards, his feet pushed away. The branches which were not broken, were bent by his ponderous weight, and the youths laughed without mercy or restraint, when they saw him precipitated into the water.

The bell was now silent, and the animal, unused to the sight of such pranks, lay still at a short distance with his eyes fixed upon Socon. The poor merchant thought he was

meditating an instant attack, and his excessive terror gave him an agility that astonished even himself. In fact, though by no means an adept at any thing that required activity, he made the most amazing efforts, and availing himself of a slight projection in the stone work of the basin, contrived to scramble into the tree, where he sat more dead than alive with fear and fatigue.

Sares and Salacris now went to rejoin the banquet, and on being interrogated respecting Socon, replied with as much composure of countenance as they could command, he had been learning to row, and that they had seen him practise, accompanied by an attendant; and then added they thought he must now be thinking of returning.

For some time accordingly, they expected him, but at length, the sun having set for half an hour, Rachis himself went to seek him in much perplexity. Approaching the basin, he called the merchant by name, when, to his astonishment, he was answered from the top of a tree; following the direction of the voice, he

was led to the side of the pond, on which grew the sanctuary of Socon, who, having in few words explained his situation, assistance was promptly procured, the iron work opened—for there were gateways in several places—and the merchant at length extricated.

His fears allayed, indignation now took possession of his breast, which was not to be overcome by the regrets and apologies of Rachis and his sons, in the one party real, in the other affected. He indeed rejoined the banquet, but it was to darken it with his frowns; and the architect was finally taught that in some breasts anger is an undying and ever blossoming weed. With the thoughtless profusion so interwoven with his character, Rachis expended the gifts of a transient hour of prosperity, and the indigence in which himself and his family were soon involved, was embittered by self-reproach,—the most terrible perhaps of all the enemies the imprudent can arm against themselves. The implacable malice of Socon, ever mindful of the fatal banquet, greatly contributed to his

ruin ; keeping off by his intrigues, those, if there were any such, who might have assisted the architect ; he made a shameful profit of his necessities, till at length he saw him in his toils.

The moment now approached for consummating his revenge, the time stipulated by the merchant for the payment of certain loans had arrived. Rachis was unable to discharge them ; Socon was inexorable ; and the sacred and revered mummies of his immediate ancestors were torn from the house of the architect, who, together with his wife and sons, was driven to an obscure cabin in a corner of the capital, while the future seemed to menace a still deeper fall, which was only averted for the present by means of the jewels attached to the sacred crocodile. The rapacity of Socon was obliged, however reluctantly to respect these, and thus the same animal which had been instrumental to the decline of his fortunes, was now their sole support.

As he was one day perambulating one of the more crowded parts of the city, he heard

some Egyptians in deep conversation respecting the immense treasures of Rhampsinitus, the king, and his intention of employing the most skilful architect in his dominions to construct a receptacle for them, of peculiar strength and secrecy.

A ray of hope instantly broke in on the mind of Rachis; he promptly repaired to the officers of the palace, obtained the appointment, together with half the stipulated sum in advance, which enabled him to extricate himself from the power of Socon; and the merchant, fond as he was of gold, felt the pleasure of receiving his loan, more than balanced by the pain of beholding the object of his hatred again on the flood of fortune.

Notwithstanding his age and increasing infirmities, Socon undertook a journey across the desert, in order to carry on a profitable negotiation with a caravan at the nearest Oasis. The negotiation was successful, but he died of the fatigue: thus ridding Rachis of an implacable foe.

In the meantime the building was rapidly

proceeding ; and when the architect considered the vast wealth of which it was to be the repository, he began to agitate the project of making himself and family the owners of it. Against the dishonour of this idea, he balanced the misfortunes from which he had just emerged, and the triumph of circumventing the monarch himself. The temptation of gold has often proved invincible, and Rachis yielded to its force. Under pretence of constructing one part of the building with peculiar nicety, he reserved the execution of it to himself, and contrived that one stone in the work should be removable at pleasure by a single man, and yet fit so accurately as to defy the scrutiny of the most observing eye.

The pile being erected, the countless riches of Egypt's monarch were stored within it, and the rest of the money due to the architect punctually paid.

He was again rich, but the salutary lesson of misfortune was forgotten, and if his life had been prolonged, he would soon have been reduced to open the royal treasury.



At this juncture, however, he was attacked by a sudden disorder, and feeling his end approaching, he called his two sons, now arrived at manhood, and spoke to them as follows :—

“ My children, notwithstanding the various reverses of fortune we have experienced, it has been my constant endeavour to restore you to that affluence my imprudence had dissipated. I have at length succeeded, and if you carefully follow my directions, you will be the dispensers of our monarch’s treasure. Of this we have far too little, whilst he has more than he can possibly require. Mark me, my sons, the clouds that cross our skies, when charged with fire, burst asunder in lightning, and in other countries\* the same careering messengers of the elements when swollen with water, are distilled in rain which supplies, though imperfectly, the place of our overflowing Nile. When the air of the desert is overcharged with heat, nature displays her abhorrence by a convulsion and the terrible si-

\* Rain was so rare in Egypt that it was regarded as a prodigy.—See Herodotus.

moom breathes destruction over the plains. Thus you observe throughout the universe, a mean state is aimed at, and so it should be with men. In endeavouring therefore to make you participate in the accumulated wealth of our king, I do but execute the will of nature, which he has resisted : be wise, therefore, and secret."

Sares and Salacris, at the outset of their father's declaration, had felt some scruples ; yet at its conclusion, they failed not to admire and assent to the force of reasoning, whose inference was so agreeable, lamenting, perhaps, at the same time, that all the decrees of nature were not equally in accordance with inclination.

Rachis now gave his children the directions requisite for finding the moveable stone,\* together with its dimensions : overcame, or at

\* It may not be improper to remark, that all the proceedings between the king of Egypt and the robbers of the treasury, mentioned in the story, are in strict coincidence with history, as they are described at large in the Euterpe of Herodotus.

least combated the scruples of his mourning consort, and soon after expired.

In a few days, Sares and Salacris thought of the royal treasury, and prepared to open it at the dead of night. They easily found the stone, and entering, were astonished at the magnificence of the scene ; but every moment as it passed, seemed pregnant with death and torture. Calling therefore to remembrance the wisdom or sophistry of their father's arguments, they fell hastily on a vessel of coined gold, loaded a bag with it and departed, having carefully replaced the important stone.

The next day, Rhampsinitus entered the treasury, when on looking at the vase containing the gold coin, he was amazed to see its contents diminished and the more so, as no traces of violence were to be seen about the building,—the seals being all unbroken.

The same practice was repeated again and again by the youths, custom lessening their apprehension ; and the monarch of Egypt, who greatly valued himself on his wealth, was in the most terrible perplexity at behold-

ing the rapid consumption of it by an unseen hand. His questions were as numerous as they were fruitless, yet his mind was somewhat relieved by the expedient which presented itself of setting a concealed trap within the building—which was accordingly put in execution.

At night, the indefatigable robbers repaired as usual to the treasury; but as they had of late taken the precaution of alternately keeping watch whilst the other entered, Sares, whose turn it was to seize the money, went into the enclosure, and on going up to the vase of gold, was instantly caught in the trap. As soon as he perceived his desperate condition, he thus addressed his brother:

“Salacris, I am fallen into a snare, lose no time then, but enter the building instantly, cut off my head and carry it away, since it is thus only we can elude detection.”

The words of his brother fell like sparks of fire on the heart of Salacris, yet he considered that if Sares remained alive till morning, he would only exchange one death for another, aggravated, perhaps, by torture and

ignominy, whilst a recognition of the robbers, that would probably ensue when his brother's face should be seen, might lead to the extirpation of his house. He nevertheless still hesitated; when his brother continued in a voice that thrilled his heart:—"Wretched man, wherefore dost thou pause?"

"That I may mingle my blood with thine," he replied.

"And that of our mother," rejoined Sares, in a whispered scream of agony, "knowest thou not that a sight of my face is instant discovery?"

"Peace!" interrupted Salacris, "even then, I thought I heard a footstep." His voice trembled with intense agitation, both listened for a breathless moment, "it was but the wind in yonder copse," at length he muttered with a choaking voice.

"Obey me, I charge thee," replied his brother, "or we are lost for ever. I will release thee from taking the life of a brother, by instantly strangling myself with a fragment of my robe."

In a state of almost delirious excitement, Salacris now entered the treasury, where he found Sares already fallen; with a frenzied hand severed his head from his body, and having fitted in the stone, hurried from the place.

Early the next day, the king visited the treasury with a few attendants; one of whom being commanded to enter and seize the prisoner, who all imagined would be found in the trap, returned with a look of surprise and terror, exclaiming:—"Most mighty monarch, what prodigy is about to happen, or rather, what has already occurred? there is a man caught in the trap without a head."

On this intelligence some of the courtiers looked incredulous, and Rhampsinitus, whose temper was not of the most pacific kind, replied:—"Make thy words good by presenting to our own eyes this robber without a head, or I swear by Osiris thou shalt lose thine, that thou mayest learn not to dally with thy prince for the sake of an insipid jest."

All now prepared to enter the building; and the king was aghast with astonishment,

on perceiving the report was no less true than extraordinary. As he stood gazing on the body, in a state of perplexity amounting to pain, the same courtier who had been the first to discover the unprecedented fact, proposed, in order, if possible, to investigate the matter, and find out the robbers, that the dead man should be suspended over the entrance of the treasury, and guards placed at some distance; and that whoever should be seen lamenting for, or displaying a remarkable interest in the body, should instantly be seized, offering withal, himself to command the band. The king agreed, and the arrangements were completed.

In the meantime, Salacris had reached his home, and having related to his mother the catastrophe of Sares, of which himself bore the dreadful token, she broke out into invectives against him, for not having burst the trap, and risked every thing rather than leave his brother's body in the power of his enemies.

In vain he represented to her that it was considerably past midnight, when the event

took place ; she was not to be pacified, but on the contrary, the more he reasoned, the less she seemed convinced, and at length told him that if he did not, by some means, contrive to rescue his brother's remains, she would herself inform against him. Salacris intreated her to be more moderate, but she continued inexorable. The youth seemed devoted to destruction, yet he resolved to grapple with his destiny. Having, towards night, loaded some asses with skins of wine, he drove them in the road which passed by the royal treasury. As soon as he came within sight of the guards who were watching the body, he unfastened, without being seen, one or two of the skins, and the wine running out, he began to beat himself and utter the most doleful exclamations, as if in perplexity which skin he should first stop. The guards hearing the outcry, and, perceiving the cause of it, ran eagerly to the spot, each with a drinking vessel in his hand, and congratulating themselves on their good fortune, began with avidity to collect the wine.

“ Alas ! woe is me,” said the pretended



merchant, "I called for help, and you do but increase my unhappiness; yet if there is any justice in Egypt, I will make you repent of your robbery."

At these words, they seemed to become more gentle, and some of them even assisted him in preventing any farther waste of the wine. On this the artful Egyptian also softened his tone, and in conclusion offered them a skin to drink upon the spot; the guards thanked him for his courtesy, of which they availed themselves; and having drunk it, Salacris requested them to take a second, this likewise they accepted on condition that he would join them, which he agreed to do, and forthwith sitting down among them, he pledged them freely, and urged them not to spare the wine—observing it could not be tasted by more worthy lips. Intoxication is a load-stone which draws its victims with an accelerated force the nearer it is approached, and thus it was with the guards; they were pleased with the stranger, gratified by his liberality, and secretly amused by what they deemed his sim-

plicity. That simplicity and that liberality were forming a net, in whose mazy entanglements they were already overwhelmed. Night had now set in, and the crafty Salacris beheld his guests stretched around him and abandoned to the sleep of inebriety.

This was the moment he anticipated; instantly seizing his brother's body, he secured it on one of the asses, shaved the right cheek of each of the guards, by way of mockery, and as a token of his triumph, and departed with the utmost speed. His mother rejoiced in the recovery of her son's remains, and, if she mourned over his death, she congratulated herself on still having a child in whom the snares of his enemies only seemed to discover a dexterity that derided their vigilance.

The fumes of the wine had evaporated ere the dawn of day; and the guards, who but slightly and imperfectly remembered their last night's adventure, were paralyzed with amazement on seeing the body had vanished; and rage was added to their astonishment when

they discovered the indignity practised on their right cheeks : yet the object of that anger and that amazement was unknown ; they, however, all joined in one vociferation.

“ It is the same wretch who has robbed us of the body, our senses, and our beards.”

They were not mistaken ; but this conclusion was sufficient only to establish their negligence, without detecting the thief. When these things were repeated to the monarch, indignation and wonder took possession of his breast ; he spent the day in council ; nor, at night, did sleep for a moment relieve him from the vexatious, nay almost fearful image, of a being, who could thus penetrate his coffers ; whom neither force could subdue, nor stratagem entangle.

In the meantime, Salacris, whose youthful temperament, like a vigorous branch, was flexible and elastic, had recovered from the excessive grief into which he had been lately thrown ; he had, indeed, in some sense, been the author of a brother's death ; but it was

to protect the life and honour of his parent ; and his tears were, perhaps, justly moderated by the dangers he had undergone, and the difficulties he had baffled in rescuing that brother from farther ignominy. He was now insatiable of adventure, and soon embarked in a new project.

All Egypt resounded with the beauty of Anobis, the only daughter of Rhampsinitus—the pride of Egypt's throne, and the secret spark that inflamed the bosoms of her most lofty princes. Salacris, to whose ardour nothing seemed unattainable, had fed eagerly on the report of her graces, of which he resolved himself to be the witness. Carefully concealing his design from every one, he disguised himself as a priest of Isis, and, providing himself with a number of tablets, sought the palace, pretending to be the bearer of oracles of great moment ; to which the goddess had attached peculiar directions to be observed, by the ladies of the court, for the weal of Egypt. His disguise was accurate,

and his deportment consistent with the assumed character; yet he well nigh forgot his composure when, after traversing various apartments, he stood in the presence of the queen and the beautiful Anobis.

Of all the tablets, except the one presented to herself, the import was vague and trifling; all of them were sealed, and the priest pronounced it to be the command of the goddess that the queen and her daughter should peruse her mandates in complete solitude. Salacris had now accomplished his determination, and was conducted from the palace, himself amazed at his audacity and success. He had, indeed, triumphed over obstacles, and eluded detection; but he had planted a dagger in his heart, and the exultation of triumph was lost in the throbbings of a hopeless passion. He had concealed the outset; he divulged the result of the adventure to his astonished parent, who, though she doubted the sanity of her son, nevertheless, on the chance of his yet retaining some

portion of sense, endeavoured to dissuade him from grasping at a phantom.

The counsels of age are seldom regarded by youth; and, if her reasoning convinced the understanding of Salacris, his heart was wholly occupied, and his will biassed by the image of Anobis.

Immediately after the departure of the pretended priest, the queen and princess proceeded to inspect alone their respective tablets: the former beheld some general instructions in morality; but the latter read, with the utmost astonishment, the following communication:—

“Think not, fair Anobis, this tablet contains an oracle; thou art thyself a divinity, on whose lips depends the happiness of Egypt’s greatest princes; yet there is one, among thy suitors, whom the gifts of nature have made greater than them all. His glance, like lightning, hath pierced the recesses of thy palace, and scanned the matchless beauty it contains; his intellect hath baffled difficulties, and

compassed projects insuperable and unattainable to the rest of mortals; and his hand hath grasped treasures worthy of the coffers of the richest monarch, and inscrutable to the eyes of common men. Those treasures shall be laid at thy feet; since, though he should retain them, their possessor, without thee, must be poor indeed. Let the secret rest in thy heart, as in oblivion. Farewell; destiny shall finish the strain she hath begun, and that strain must, to me, be sweet, since thou art its glorious theme."

The perusal of these words threw the princess into a fever of excitement and perplexity; she possibly felt her dignity offended at the boldness of the unseen lover; yet his diction pleased her imagination, and, since herself was the object of the supposed audacity, her breast could not be otherwise than a lenient judge. She read the tablet again; and, finally, resolved on the secrecy it enjoined; yet, when she sank to repose, her fancy was still haunted with the mysterious circumstances of the day; wild and fantastic visions rose before her,

and songs of strange and unheard-of sweetness ravished the ear of her fancy yet they all ended in the same words:—

“Destiny shall finish the strain she hath begun, and that strain must be sweet to me, since thou art its glorious theme.”

Early the next morning she received a summons from her father, in pursuance of a new plan he had resolved to adopt, for the detection of the crafty robber. He had taken the strange resolution of placing his daughter within the treasury, with some attendants at a proper distance, the circumstance being generally known; and commanded the princess to make a feint of receiving, with caresses, him that should present himself, but first to require an account of that adventure of his life which he considered most strange and unexampled; and, having thus extorted a confession from the thief, to seize him, and call for the attendants.

Anobis shuddered at the order; but Rhampsinitus was resolute. The project was as weak as it was extraordinary, and might easily have



been eluded by the crafty Egyptian, if he had determined not to approach the building; but Salacris was dauntless and adventurous, and resolved to seize the opportunity thus afforded of again beholding the object of his affections. The circumstance, indeed, of the attendants was, of course unknown to him, and, if he had been aware of it, his resolution would have been equally unshaken. Waiting, accordingly, till midnight, he cut off one of the arms of his deceased brother, as high as the shoulder, and, having fastened a sleeve upon it, hid it under his cloak, and proceeded, with the utmost secrecy, to the treasury. Removing the stone, as usual, he entered the building, without his sandals, and said in a low voice:—

“Is it true that these walls enshrine Anobis—the fairest of Egypt’s daughters?”

The princess trembled at his words; for there was something in the tone that reminded her of the priest, from whom she had received so mysterious a communication the day before. She, however, collected her utmost resolution, and replied:—

“That unhappy princess is indeed here.”

She would have continued; but Salacris, fired at the well-known voice, sprang towards the speaker, and, in spite of the almost total darkness, gently seized and kissed her hand.

“Pause, presumptuous stranger,” said Anobis, “the mandate of a father and a king ought, perhaps, to bind a daughter and a subject; yet, before we have any farther converse, I require of thee an account of the most extraordinary adventure that ever befell thee in the whole course of thy life.”

“Bright Anobis,” answered Salacris, “thy curiosity hath touched a string, in this heart, whose thrilling vibration tells alike of pain and triumph: thy slave is, in truth the most impious and crafty of mankind. The most impious, inasmuch as he cut off his brother’s head, when the latter was caught in a trap in this treasury; and the most crafty, inasmuch as he afterwards rescued that brother’s body, by intoxicating the guards set to watch it.”

“Treason,” cried the princess, “by Osiris, these words of thine are mortal.”

As she said this, she seized his clothes, and the wily Salakris, favoured by the darkness, thrust out the arm of his dead brother from his cloak, which Anobis grasped with all her might, calling, at the same time, for the attendants; whilst, with rapid and noiseless step, the incomparable robber had escaped through the aperture, and replaced the stone. At the signal of the princess, the guards appeared from a secret station; each wielded a weapon and a torch; but the former was useless, since the latter only revealed the princess holding an arm, the owner of which had vanished.

In mute astonishment Anobis repaired to the palace; and Rhampsinitus, having heard the affair, convened a council to consider by what means they should farther pursue, or propitiate a being who could penetrate walls, like the most subtle elements, and surrender his head and limbs, with as little

scruple and difficulty, as a part of his dress.

The opinions of the assembly were various; and many strange circumstances were, as is usually the case, added to those which had really transpired. Streams of blood were reported to have been seen; nor were there wanting some who swore, by all the gods, that a man, without an head, and with one arm, had been discovered walking up and down by the royal treasury.

The monarch heard and weighed their sentiments; and, finally, came to the resolution of proclaiming through his dominions that if the man who had so long deceived and baffled his king, would make himself known, he should not only be pardoned, but receive, in addition, a great reward.

Salakris listened to the proclamation; he had defied the power and vigilance, and he now resolved to trust the word of the monarch. He accordingly revealed himself to the court; and, when he had explained

the various stratagems he had employed, Rhampsinitus forgot his indignation at the recital of such matchless ingenuity; confirmed his pardon on the spot, and gave him in marriage the fair Anobis.

An immeasurable distance, doubtless, intervened between the princess and the plebeian, yet the former had, perhaps, been lowered by the strange part she had been obliged to execute, by her father's command; and the latter was at least distinguished and, in his monarch's estimation, elevated by the versatility of his genius.

When introduced to her lover, the princess could not be insensible to his fine form, flashing eyes, and graceful deportment; and, as he pressed her hand with a thrill of ardour, he awakened a thousand sensations of pleasure, a thousand soft emotions, as he whispered:—

“Destiny shall complete the strain she hath begun; and that strain must be sweet to me, since thou art its glorious theme.”

The nuptials were celebrated with splendour; Salakris never, for a moment, forgot his

parent, who shared the full tide of his fortune ; and the affection and fidelity with which he ever served, more than obliterated the fraud which had formerly mocked his king.

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